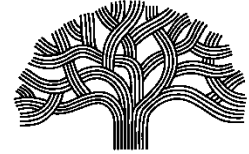


CITY OF OAKLAND



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March 10, 2021

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5150
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Senate Bill 57 (Wiener) Overdose Prevention Program
Support from the Mayor of Oakland and the Oakland City Council**

Dear Senator Wiener:

On behalf of the City of Oakland, we write to express our support of Senate Bill 57 (Wiener) to enact an overdose prevention program and include the City of Oakland within the pilot. This legislation would authorize the City of Oakland to approve entities within our jurisdiction to establish and operate overdose prevention programs (OPP) for persons 18 years of age or older who satisfy certain requirements.

Below are just some of the reasons why the City of Oakland wants to be part of this pilot program:

- Deaths from accidental overdose in Alameda County disproportionately occur among African American residents;
- Many of the most marginalized and high-risk drug users are homeless or in insecure housing and are forced to inject in public or semi-public spaces, such as streets, parks, mass transit, or bathrooms, and the lack of privacy compromises the health, well-being, and safety of the injection drug user and the surrounding community, with discarded syringes posing a health hazard, and overdose fatalities increasingly occur in public or semi-public spaces;
- The Oakland Fire Department and Emergency Ambulance Services reported utilizing over 800 Narcan opioid overdose treatment interventions since 2013;
- In 2018 the OAK 3-1-1 system recorded 569 service requests for needle collection/disposal and \$143,000 was expended on the biohazard contract for collection of needles and human waste;

- According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2010 nearly 4,000 new cases of HIV were attributed to unsafe injections, and heroin overdose mortality in the United States nearly tripled between 2010 and 2014; and
- Research has shown that these programs do not encourage additional drug use or increase crime in the surrounding area, and potentially save millions of dollars in healthcare and incarceration costs.

As demands for reform of the criminal legal system reverberate around the country, OPPs offer an alternative framework for addressing both drug use as well as the enforcement of drug laws that is generally targeted at communities of color. OPPs bring people inside, to a safe and therapeutic space, instead of leaving them vulnerable to police intervention, arrest, and incarceration. OPPs provide a mechanism to address public drug use that does not rely on policing, consistent with the renewed interest in using police resources more appropriately.

We look forward to working with you and to help move this legislation forward.

Sincerely,



Libby Schaaf
Mayor
City of Oakland



Nikki Fortunato Bas
Council Member
City of Oakland