



NEWS RELEASE

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Assemblymember Tom Daly Introduces Legislation to Require California to Adopt Best Practices for Recovery Residences

AB 1779 Would Establish Evidence-Based Standards to Promote Supportive Environments that are Safe for Both Residents & Surrounding Neighborhoods

Sacramento – Assemblymember Tom Daly (D – Anaheim) introduced legislation, Assembly Bill (AB) 1779, to require the state to adopt a set of best practices for recovery residences, also known as sober homes or sober living homes.

In addition, AB 1779 would establish evidence-based minimal standards for recovery residences, whose occupants are protected by federal and state housing and anti-discrimination laws.

“Recovery residences are one stop along a lengthy process for people seeking to emerge from drug or alcohol addiction,” Assemblymember Daly said. “But unlike residential treatment facilities, which are subject to licensure by the state, recovery residences are private apartments or houses that are not licensed or regulated.”

Assemblymember Daly expects the bill to receive the support of cities, health officials, advocates for people in recovery, and others.

AB 1779 would require the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to adopt the “Best Practices for Operating Recovery Housing” that are being developed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services. The bill would also establish a process for residences which abide by a set of quality control standards. Those standards include providing residents with a safe, supportive drug- and alcohol-free environment, and encouraging residents’ sense of belonging and responsibility toward the community around them.

In addition, Assemblymember Daly’s bill requires that entities wishing to receive state or local funding would be prohibited from referring individuals to residences that have not agreed to abide by the quality control standards. Compliance with the standards would be voluntary, not mandatory.

According to the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), an estimated 88,000 Americans die from alcohol-related causes annually, making alcohol the third leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. (behind tobacco and poor diet/physical inactivity). Excessive alcohol use is estimated to shorten the lives of those who die because of it by an average of 30 years

The CDC also estimated that more than 72,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2017, including illicit drugs and prescription opioids – a two-fold increase in a decade. About two-thirds of those overdoses involved opioids.

The CDC further estimates that more than 5,000 Californians died from overdoses in 2017, an increase of more than 5% above the previous year, due partially to a rise in the use of fentanyl. Fentanyl was developed as a synthetic opioid for treating severe pain, such as in advanced stages of cancer, and the CDC says it's at least 50 times more potent than morphine.

“Despite the growing death toll from opioid and alcohol abuse and addiction, California lacks a uniform set of standards to guide individuals and their loved ones in identifying safe, reliable housing accommodations that will be conducive to recovery,” Daly said.

“AB 1779 will enable California to provide accurate and up-to-date information that will protect individuals and families seeking recovery housing,” Daly added. “And by adopting best practices including minimum standards for recovery residences, California will take a significant step towards increasing the number of residences that are safe for people in recovery and for the communities where they are located.”

Assemblymember Tom Daly represents California's 69th Assembly District, which includes the cities of Anaheim, Garden Grove, Orange & Santa Ana.

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