

March 9, 2021

Senator Richard Pan, MD.
Chair, Senate Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 2191
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 110 (Wiener): Substance use disorder
services: contingency management services**

Position: Support

**We are
the Drug
Policy
Alliance.**

Board Members
Alejandro Madrazo
Angela Pacheco
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Dear Dr. Pan:

The Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) writes to express strong support for Senate Bill 110 by Senator Scott Wiener. This bill will require Medi-Cal to cover contingency management programs as a covered benefit and clarify that these programs are not in violation of state law that prohibits kickbacks from courses of treatment. DPA is the nation's leading organization working to end the war on drugs and build a policy response to drugs grounded in science, compassion, health and human rights. We have long advocated for increased access to evidence-based substance use disorder treatment in the community.

Our nation is in the midst of an overdose epidemic. Overdose deaths have continued to rise across the country; we lost more than 70,000 people in 2019 with massive increases being seen during the first few months of 2020. In San Francisco in 2019, roughly 60 percent of all overdose deaths were methamphetamine-related, and in Los Angeles County between 2008 and 2017, the number of methamphetamine overdose deaths rose 707 percent. There is a dire need for effective, attractive, and accessible substance use disorder treatment, especially for people who use stimulants.

Contingency management is a highly effective model of substance use disorder treatment that involves providing incentives for behavioral outcomes aligned with treatment goals. For example, a participant could receive gift cards or vouchers in exchange for a negative drug test, attending treatment sessions, meeting health goals, or reducing substance use. Hundreds of peer-reviewed research articles spanning over thirty years have consistently demonstrated the positive impacts of contingency management, including reductions in drug use, increased treatment retention, compatibility with other forms of treatment, and effectiveness across diverse populations. Contingency management is the most effective treatment for stimulant use disorders, for which there currently are no FDA-approved medications. It can be provided as a low-threshold intervention, welcoming people who may not feel they are ready for or in need of more intensive treatment.

Unfortunately, these programs are not eligible for reimbursement under Medi-Cal, leaving many programs without viable funding sources from which to provide lifesaving services. SB 110 will address these issues by requiring Medi-Cal to reimburse for contingency management services and clarifying that contingency management does not violate anti-kickback provisions.

For these reasons, among others, Drug Policy Alliance strongly supports SB 110 (Wiener). If you have any questions about our position, please contact me directly at 707-338-7142 or our policy consultant Glenn Backes at 916-202-2538 or glennbackes@mac.com. Thank you for your continued leadership for all Californians.

Respectfully,



Jeannette Zanipatin, Esq.
CA State Director

cc: Senator Scott Wiener c/o Severiano.Christian@sen.ca.gov