



**California
Behavioral Health
Planning Council**

ADVOCACY • EVALUATION • INCLUSION

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MS 2706

June 24, 2026

The Honorable Mia Bonta, Chair
Assembly Health Committee
1020 N Street, Suite 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Opposition to SB 490 – Alcohol and drug programs.

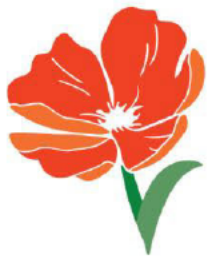
Dear Assemblymember Bonta:

On behalf of the California Behavioral Health Planning Council (CBHPC), I am writing to express our opposition to Senate Bill (SB) 490 (Umberg).

Public Law 102-321 requires the California Behavioral Health Planning Council to advocate for people with lived experience of serious mental illness. Under Welfare and Institutions Code §§ 5771 and 5772, we also advise the Department of Health Care Services and the Legislature on behavioral health policies and priorities. Our members include people with lived experience, family members, parents of children with serious emotional disturbances, service providers, professionals, and representatives from state departments. Their perspectives help shape our recommendations.

SB 490 intends to establish timelines for the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to investigate allegations of treatment being provided within unlicensed recovery residences or sober living homes. It would also authorize DHCS to approve counties that elect to administer the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) to conduct site visits and enforce compliance with existing state licensing requirements should DHCS not be able to meet the timelines. Although we recognize the well-intentioned purpose behind the bill, we remain deeply concerned about the potential implications it may have on counties.

While the bill emphasizes the responsibility of the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to investigate allegations, the compressed timelines could limit the Department's capacity to thoroughly complete



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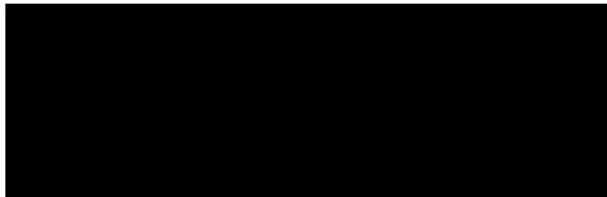
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investigations within the specified timeframes and potentially shift this responsibility to the counties where the alleged unlicensed facility is located. Given the already strained behavioral health workforce, it would be challenging for counties to dedicate staff to administer these duties and adhere to the tightened timelines without impacting direct services for beneficiaries.

SB 490 lacks funding provisions and inadequate guidelines regarding county reimbursement for work performed under the bill. Furthermore, the outlined mandates in the bill are outside the purview of county behavioral health departments considering counties do not have authority, oversight, or code enforcement jurisdiction over unlicensed facilities. This would require counties to provide training to designated teams without sufficient funding or guidance.

For these reasons, the Council respectfully opposes SB 490. If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Bayardo, Executive Officer, at (916) 750-3778 or via e-mail at Jenny.Bayardo@cbhpc.dhcs.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Tony Vartan
Chairperson

cc: The Honorable Senator Thomas Umberg
Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee
Zach Keller, Legislative Director