



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy D.A.

Jonathan.raven@yolocounty.org

Bilingual Spanish Representative available

@ (530)666-8356

McCarty's Drug Treatment Bill Passes out of Assembly Floor and is Headed to the Senate
AB 1542 would provide treatment to those involved in the criminal justice system who live with drug addiction

(Woodland, CA) – **June 3, 2021** – On June 2, 2021, California Assembly member Kevin McCarty's Yolo County Bill passed through the Assembly floor on a vote of 65-1, with one Republican member opposing. McCarty authored AB 1542 in partnership with Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig and Yolo County Supervisor Gary Sandy. State Senator Bill Dodd is a co-author. If it becomes law, AB 1542 would allow Yolo County to develop a secured treatment facility for individuals who are involved in the criminal justice system and who live with substance use disorders. Those eligible for the treatment program would include people who have committed drug motivated felonies that, absent this program, would result in them being sentenced to jail or prison. Those who commit misdemeanors, simple drug possession, sex offenses, and strike offenses would not be eligible. Those eligible would be assessed by treatment providers who would decide the level and length of treatment. Individuals found suitable for the program would be given a choice of serving time in jail or prison, or entering the soft secured facility where they would receive treatment to help them get well. Once they have completed the secured inpatient program, they would move to a residential treatment facility or receive intensive outpatient treatment. This is all contingent on the assessment and recommendation of the treatment providers. After completing the program, the subject current charges and prior drug convictions would be dismissed and expunged from their record so they can get a fresh start.

After, McCarty introduced the Bill, Assembly Member Sharon Quirk- Silver (D – Fullerton) addressed the Chamber. "Some of you may remember how I spoke about my brother Billy, someone who suffered from addiction, chronic alcoholism and many times would be in and out of jail. We intervened as many times as we could and yet he still

died. This program would give those who choose to, who choose to do it voluntarily, to participate in a pilot program as an alternative to jail or prison. We have far too many individuals from very young ages to older ages who suffer from addiction, whether its drugs or alcohol, and we do not treat them. I support this bill and ask you to support a pilot program in Yolo County, AB 1542, in honor of my brother Billy.”

Sixty-five members voted in favor of the bill and one member, Heath Flora (Republican – Stanislaus) voted in opposition. AB 1542 was previously supported by the Yolo County Board of Supervisors at an April 20, 2021 meeting. Former Yolo County Office of Education Superintendent Dr. Jesse Ortiz, who spoke in favor of the bill at a recent Board of Supervisors meeting, stated, "Hope Yolo will give people a choice to help themselves and families. When individuals successfully complete the program, they will have their criminal records expunged which will lead to opportunities to reliable employment. The model being used has proven to work and will benefit the total community. Assembly member McCarty and District Attorney Reisig should be commended for their leadership and compassion for attempting to do what's right for this vulnerable population."

McCarty stated, “I’m pleased that 65 of my Assembly colleagues share my belief that Hope Yolo will help many people get well, become productive members of society, and stay out of the criminal justice system.” AB 1542 will next move to the State Senate.

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