

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Any official position of the City of Los Angeles, with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, SB 57 (Wiener), introduced on December 7, 2020, would allow Los Angeles County, City and County of San Francisco, and the City of Oakland to authorize the operation of an Overdose Prevention Program (OPP), also known as a Supervised Injection Services Program, for adults that satisfy specified requirements; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Prevention Programs would create a space where medical staff could monitor a patient's use of controlled substances, thereby mitigating the public health risks of communicable diseases and overdose deaths; and

WHEREAS, Drug overdose continues to be a leading cause of accidental death in California; and in January 2021, the LA County Department of Public Health co-released a report titled, *Recent Trends in Mortality Rates and Causes of Death Among People Experiencing Homelessness in Los Angeles County*, with the Department of the Medical Examiner-Coroner, the Departments of Health Services and Mental Health, the LA County CEO Homeless Initiative, and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority to launch a homeless mortality prevention initiative (HMPI); and

WHEREAS, Page 16, recommendation # 9 in the aforementioned report makes the recommendation to support Overdose Prevention Program legislation at the state level amongst a list of policy recommendations and to implement an OPP in LA County to better address the needs of individuals with substance use disorders and those experiencing homelessness, as OPP can serve as an important engagement opportunity for high-risk populations; and

WHEREAS, Across the County of Los Angeles, the percentage of overdose deaths involving fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid, tripled between 2018 and 2020. In the first seven months of 2020, the overdose rates for individuals experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County saw an increase of 33.2% from January to July alone, illustrating the need for a significant public health intervention; and

WHEREAS, 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

WHEREAS, A recent study projects that Overdose Prevention Programs, like the ones proposed by SB 57, could save jurisdictions \$3.5 million annually per site by reducing the incidence of HIV and Hepatitis C and increasing the number of people entering treatment; and

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WHEREAS, Similar supervised Overdose Prevention Programs have expanded around the world and have resulted in decreases of injection-related harms among intravenous drug users. Vancouver is one example, where overdose rates decreased by 35% following the opening of one supervised injection site; and

WHEREAS, The 2020 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count showed 66,436 people in Los Angeles County experiencing homelessness, a 12.7% rise from the 2019 point-in-time count; and

WHEREAS, Homeless populations face increased risk with regard to health risks surrounding controlled substance use, including overdoses and communicable diseases, evidenced by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health data showing that 926 homeless people died in the county in the first seven months of 2020, a 26% increase over the same period the previous year—with nearly 30% of those deaths caused by drug overdoses in 2020; and

WHEREAS, The City of Los Angeles is well-positioned to be one of the jurisdictions to pilot and evaluate health programs that have proven effective in reducing the number and rate of fatal drug overdoses, as well as reducing emergency room use and hospitalizations related to drug overdose; and

WHEREAS, SB 57 is consistent with the movement away from the criminalization of mental health and substance use disorders and the criminalization of homelessness, in favor of public health approaches;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby: includes in its 2021-2022 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for SB 57 (Wiener) which would allow the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles to open Overdose Prevention Program sites in an effort to reduce overdoses and communicable diseases and partner those sites with medical and health professionals to offer counseling and services; and SEEK AMENDMENT to include the City of Los Angeles in the list of jurisdictions authorized to operate an Overdose Prevention Program.

PRESENTED BY: 
NITHYA RAMAN
Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY: 
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Councilmember, 10th District