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**McCarty's Drug Treatment Bill Passes out of Public Safety Committee
AB 1928 would provide treatment to those criminally justice involved
who live with drug addiction**

(Woodland, CA) – March 16, 2022 – On March 15, 2022, California Assembly Member Kevin McCarty's drug treatment bill passed through the Assembly Public Safety Committee with no opposition votes. McCarty authored AB 1928 in partnership with Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig and Yolo County Supervisor Gary Sandy. Text of proposed legislation can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3tfLTLM>

If it becomes law, AB 1928 would allow the counties of Yolo, Santa Clara, and San Joaquin to develop a secured treatment facility for individuals who are criminally justice involved 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 determine the level and length of treatment. Individuals found suitable for the program would be given a choice of serving their sentence in prison or entering the 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. The treatment plan for each individual would be based on the assessment and recommendation of the treatment providers. After completing the program, the current charges and prior drug convictions would be dismissed and expunged from their record so they can get a fresh start.

McCarty introduced the Bill concept and then Public Safety Committee Chair Reginald Jones-Sawyer asked Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig for his comments. Reisig, speaking by phone due to the COVID-19 pandemic, stated, "too many people who suffer from substance use disorder are going to jail or prison for crimes that are motivated by their addiction. And prison is not a place where people who are sick, go to get better. So instead, AB 1928 envisions creating a secure hospital-like treatment facility without jails and bars and guards and guns that can serve as a sanctuary for seriously addicted felony offenders who voluntarily choose to try local community-based treatment and wrap-around

services in a safe and secure setting right here at home instead of being shipped off and warehoused behind bars and we're calling this place Hope California."

Anthony Brown also testified in support of the bill. Brown is a Licensed Psychiatric Technician, Registered Nurse, Public Health Nurse, Certified Addiction Treatment Counselor, Certified Anger Management Facilitator, and Certified Domestic Violence Specialist. In the 1990s, he spent nearly 10 years in and out of jails and prisons in California. Brown told Committee members, "The passing of this piece of legislation will enable individuals like me become productive members of society by addressing their addiction early in life. I have lived inside prison walls and have developed programs to serve those who have been incarcerated. I have been addicted to substances and have counseled those who are afflicted. The Hope California Bill has the potential of offering a roadmap to the destination that took me 22 years to achieve."

There were a number of individuals representing various organizations who spoke in opposition to the Bill. The roll call vote was taken with five aye votes and two abstentions. McCarty stated, "The addiction crisis is in front of us and it's not going away. The longer we wait the more lives it will cost. AB 1928 Hope California is an innovative pilot program to provide treatment over incarceration."

The next stop for AB 1928 is the Assembly Health Committee where the Bill will be heard. Yolo County Supervisor Sandy stated he was pleased to see the Bill make it out of the Public Safety Committee and is looking forward to future robust discussions. "The population we are looking at is ill and suffers from serious drug addictions. But they also are committing significant crimes in our communities which must be addressed. We need to try something new and this bill will give those who would be spending time in jail or prison a choice and opportunity to get the help they need in a secure facility. It's the humane way to treat them."

For more information on AB 1928 "Hope California" please visit: <https://yoloda.org/hope-california/>

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