



AUG 22 2022

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 57 without my signature.

This bill authorizes certain jurisdictions to approve any number of "overdose prevention programs," often referred to as safe injection or consumption sites, where individuals may use illegal controlled substances at supervised facilities.

I have long supported the cutting edge of harm reduction strategies. However, I am acutely concerned about the operations of safe injection sites without strong, engaged local leadership and well-documented, vetted, and thoughtful operational and sustainability plans.

The unlimited number of safe injection sites that this bill would authorize – facilities which could exist well into the later part of this decade – could induce a world of unintended consequences. It is possible that these sites would help improve the safety and health of our urban areas, but if done without a strong plan, they could work against this purpose. These unintended consequences in cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Oakland cannot be taken lightly. Worsening drug consumption challenges in these areas is not a risk we can take.

We should strive to ensure our innovative efforts are well planned, even when they start as pilots, to help mitigate the potential for unintended impacts. Therefore, I am instructing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to convene city and county officials to discuss minimum standards and best practices for safe and sustainable overdose prevention programs. I remain open to this discussion when those local officials come back to the Legislature with recommendations for a truly limited pilot program – with comprehensive plans for siting, operations, community partnerships, and fiscal sustainability that demonstrate how these programs will be run safely and effectively.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom

