



CITY of LAGUNA NIGUEL

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CITY COUNCIL

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Council Member Elaine Gennawey
Council Member Fred Minagar
Council Member Sandy Rains

March 8, 2019

The Honorable Patricia C. Bates
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 305
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: Support of S.B. 161

Dear Senator Bates,

On behalf of the City of Laguna Niguel, I am writing to express our support of your bill, S.B. 161: *Protecting California from the Dangers of Fentanyl*, which would stem the influx of the deadly drug fentanyl into Laguna Niguel and surrounding communities.

The opioid epidemic continues to plague the country as the current estimation of daily opioid-related deaths stands at 130. According to a recent study by the Center for Disease Control, fentanyl, an opiate, is officially the most lethal drug in America and requires action specific to the drug.

According to a 2017 study by the Orange County Health Care Agency and Sheriff-Coroner, Laguna Niguel is located in the hardest hit region of Orange County for opioid abuse. In addition, Laguna Niguel Police Services has, over the past year, responded to five overdose-related deaths and administered Naloxone, the opioid overdose reversing agent on three separate occasions. Opioid use and abuse is undoubtedly an epidemic. It is an epidemic that requires and deserves attention and action from all levels of government. S.B. 161 is a step in the right direction for Laguna Niguel, surrounding communities and California as a whole.

On March 6, 2018, the Laguna Niguel City Council passed Resolution No. 2018-1242 which stated the City's recognition of the importance of the opioid abuse issue and its support for efforts to combat the opioid epidemic. Laguna Niguel is wholeheartedly committed to support any effort that would reduce access to opiates, address drug abuse, and finally create real solutions to this real problem.

Passage of S.B. 161 would result in the rescheduling of fentanyl to place it into the same category as drugs such as heroin and cocaine; targets those distributing, trafficking and selling mass quantities; and serves as a deterrent. S.B. 161 fights fentanyl distribution at the source and that is a fight worth being a part of. Laguna Niguel unreservedly supports S.B. 161 and encourages its passage from the Senate Public Safety Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Mark Jennings'.

John Mark Jennings
Mayor

cc: Members, Senate Public Safety Committee
Jennifer Kaku, Consultant, Senate Public Safety Committee