



CITY OF LAGUNA NIGUEL

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CITY COUNCIL

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June 24, 2025

The Honorable Mia Bonta Portantino
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
1020 N Street, Room 390
Sacramento, CA 05814

SUBJECT: SB 35 (Umberg) Alcohol and Drug Programs
Notice of SUPPORT (As Amended 6/11/2025)

Dear Assembly Member Bonta,

The City of Laguna Niguel is pleased to support **SB 35 (Umberg)**, which would enhance the oversight and enforcement of existing state licensing laws for alcohol and drug treatment facilities.

Residential recovery housing provides a range of benefits to some of California's most vulnerable residents, and it is critical that their needs are prioritized over profits. Compliance with state licensing laws administered by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is essential to safeguarding residents' well-being and maintaining quality care.

Existing state law prohibits any drug and alcohol treatment facility that provides recovery, treatment, or detoxification services from operating without first obtaining a valid license from DHCS. Compliance with state licensing laws is essential to safeguard the well-being of residents in sober living homes.

A recent state [audit](#) revealed that DHCS has not consistently investigated allegations of unlicensed facilities providing or advertising treatment services. The department has often failed to conduct site visits and follow-ups to ensure illegal operations have stopped.

In one example highlighted in the audit, DHCS substantiated an allegation that an unlicensed facility was unlawfully providing services. However, the audit found no indication that the department followed up to verify the facility's claim that it had ceased operations, nor did DHCS conduct a site visit to confirm compliance.

To address these gaps, the auditor recommended that DHCS improve the timeliness of inspections and complaint investigations, conduct more site visits, and establish follow-up procedures to ensure unlicensed facilities cease unlawful operations. SB 35 would implement these recommendations by requiring DHCS to meet specific timelines for investigating allegations of unlicensed treatment services. If the department fails to meet these deadlines, counties could work with the department to conduct site visits and enforce licensure laws themselves. SB 35 also requires DHCS to conduct follow-up site visits to ensure unlawful activity has stopped.

SB 35 would help meet our shared goals of ensuring recovery housing meets standards for patient care, which is central to effective treatment outcomes and community well-being. For these reasons, the City of Laguna Niguel is pleased to support **SB 35 (Umberg)**.

Should you have any questions about our position, please contact Kevin O'Connor, Management Assistant, at koconnor@cityoflagunaniguel.org.

Sincerely,



Ray Gennawey
Mayor

Cc: State Senator Umberg, 34th District
Assembly Committee on Health
Laguna Niguel City Council