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Councilmember

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Councilmember

April 7, 2026

The Honorable Anna Caballero
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 412
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 490(Umberg) Alcohol and drug programs.
Notice of SUPPORT *(As Amended 01/05/2026)*

Dear Senator Caballero,

The City of Paramount is pleased to support SB 490 (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 safeguard residents' well-being and maintain 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 these state licensing laws is essential to safeguard the well-being and safety 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 it conduct a site visit to confirm compliance.

To address these gaps, the auditor recommended that DHCS improve the timeliness of inspections and compliance investigations, conduct more site visits, and establish follow-up procedures to ensure unlicensed facilities cease unlawful operations.

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SB 490 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 490 also requires DHCS to conduct follow-up site visits to ensure unlawful activity has stopped.

As a dense, working-class community with a high proportion of multifamily housing and limited available space for social-service facilities, the City of Paramount is directly affected by gaps in state oversight of unlicensed treatment operations. Paramount has experienced situations where unregulated sober living homes have generated neighborhood complaints, strained public safety resources, and created uncertainty for residents who rely on legitimate, licensed recovery services. Without timely investigations or follow-up from DHCS, cities like Paramount are left without clear enforcement pathways, prolonging unsafe conditions for both clients and surrounding neighborhoods. SB 490 would give Paramount and other cities the ability to partner with the State to ensure that facilities operating in our community are properly licensed, accountable, and providing safe, lawful care.

By setting clear timelines and expectations for investigations and follow-ups, the bill improves accountability and outcomes using existing infrastructure and resources. More importantly, SB 490 also empowers local governments to partner with the State to conduct site inspections and enforce licensing laws. This collaboration allows the State to leverage local capacity to respond swiftly to violations, ensure compliance, and better protect public health and safety.

SB 490 would help meet shared State and city goals by 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 Paramount is pleased to support SB 490 (Umberg). Please feel free to contact City Manager John Moreno at (562) 220-2225, if you have any questions. We thank you for your time and consideration.

CITY OF PARAMOUNT



Peggy Lemons
Mayor

Cc: Honorable Congresswoman Nanette Barragan, 44th District
Honorable Assemblymember Jose Luis Solache, 62nd District
Honorable State Senator Lena Gonzalez, 33rd District
Nicholas Cabeza, Public Affairs Manager, League of California Cities
Jorge Morales, Legislative and Governmental Affairs Consultant, California Contract Cities Association