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With Passage of AB 1860, Governor Newsom Takes Critical Action Towards Addressing the Workforce Crisis

Sacramento, CA – The California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives (CAADPE) commends Governor Gavin Newsom for signing [Assembly Bill 1860 \(Ward\)](#). This vital bill takes direct aim at California’s growing workforce shortage by eliminating burdensome registration requirements for all individuals who are not LPHAs, in order to provide substance use disorder (SUD) counseling services. In theory, this requirement was meant to safeguard clients, but in practice, discouraged individuals completing their required graduate school practicums from working in the substance use disorder field.

“All communities deserve equal access to treatment to help us fight the opioid epidemic. We all recognize the devastating impact illegal drugs have on our communities. AB 1860 by Assemblymember Ward is part of the solution and will help provide the care we need to treat people struggling with a substance use disorder,” said Robb Layne, Executive Director of CAADPE. **“We are proud to sponsor this vital bill and we are confident that this will help close our employment gap and aid Californians in getting the care they need to combat their substance use disorder. We applaud Governor Gavin Newsom for recognizing this fundamental need to address our state's workforce shortage and taking a step in the right direction by signing AB 1860 into law.”**

[In 2021 more Americans died by overdose than any other year.](#) In fact, just in California, [21 people die by overdose for every 100,000 people,](#) but we have less than 20,000 substance use disorder counselors available to help in California. **“We’re losing thousands of people in California to drug overdoses every year,”** said Assemblymember Ward (D-San Diego). **“AB 1860 will streamline the process for graduate students to gain critical field experience, while entering the workforce sooner so they can begin saving lives.”**

AB 1860 will improve the current training process for SUD counselors by allowing removing the requirement for graduate students interns who are pursuing a career in psychology, marriage and

family therapy, social work, or counseling to complete supervised hours with a certifying organization.

About CAADPE:

Established in 1989, CAADPE member agencies provide substance use disorder treatment services at over 300 sites in California. CAADPE is the ONLY state-wide Association representing all types of substance use disorder treatment programs in California.

Membership in CAADPE is by agency, and each member agency is represented at CAADPE by the chief executive leader or his/her designee.

CAADPE is organized by chapters throughout the state and headquartered in Sacramento for easy access to state government. At the state-wide level, a volunteer **board of directors**, guides the Association and its policies on issues vital to its members.

It is through the **committee structure** that CAADPE addresses the needs of the field and identifies the policy issues of the organization. CAADPE members are urged to volunteer their time in their respective areas of expertise. **<http://www.caadpe.org>**

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