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May 23, 2023

ASSEMBLY FLOOR ALERT

**AB 33 (Bains): Fentanyl Addiction and Overdose Prevention Task Force.
As Amended May 18, 2023 – SUPPORT
Assembly Third Reading File**

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 of the state's counties, is pleased to support Assembly Bill (AB) 33. This measure would, subject to an appropriation, establish the Fentanyl Addiction and Overdose Prevention Task Force to undertake various duties relating to the assessment of the nature and extent of fentanyl abuse in California and the evaluation of approaches to increase public awareness of fentanyl abuse.

The opioid epidemic remains a public health and safety crisis in California. According to the California Department of Public Health, since 2015, the opioid epidemic has shifted to include more potent synthetic opioids of illicit supply, including fentanyl, which is one reason for the dramatic increase of drug-related overdose deaths. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 150 people die every day from overdoses related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl. And in California, fentanyl-related overdose deaths have been increasing at an unpredictable pace. By focusing on strategies to reduce the availability of fentanyl and increase public awareness, the Task Force will serve an important role through its policy recommendations on the implementation of evidence-based practices to reduce the devastating impact that fentanyl is having on our communities.

Counties appreciate the amendments accepted in Assembly Public Safety Committee to add a representative from a local health department, the County Behavioral Health Directors Association, and the County Health Executives Association of California. Adding these important local perspectives will enhance the development of recommendations to strengthen state and local efforts to prevent fentanyl abuse and death from the intentional use of fentanyl or the unintentional use of illicit substances containing fentanyl, protect and assist persons who misuse fentanyl or other illicit substances that may contain fentanyl, and develop policy recommendations on the implementation of evidence-based practices to reduce fentanyl overdoses. Ultimately, this crisis is a multifaceted problem that requires collaborative strategies and cross-disciplinary solutions at the state and local level.

For the reasons outlined above, CSAC is pleased to support AB 33 and respectfully requests your AYE vote. Should you or your staff have additional questions about our position, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jolie Onodera, CSAC Senior Legislative Advocate at jonodera@counties.org and Ryan Morimune, CSAC Legislative Advocate at rmorimune@counties.org.

cc: Gary Olsen, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus