



ASSEMBLY MEMBER

Evan Low 羅達倫

加州州眾議員 — DISTRICT 28



PRESS RELEASE

SACRAMENTO — California State Assembly has passed AB 888, which is authored by Assemblymember Evan Low (D-Silicon Valley) to ensure patients seeking treatment for pain are made aware of non-pharmacological therapies and provided an opportunity to request a referral for those treatments prior to filling a prescription for opioids.

Acupuncture, chiropractic care, physical and occupational therapy, as well as behavior health, are all demonstrated to be effective in treating pain, and both Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and American College of Physicians have recommended that patients pursue these less invasive options before taking opioid medication.

“AB 888 is a bill that I believe is critical to addressing the opioid crisis. The bill recognizes that there are several proven, evidence-based treatments for pain that are not opioids, which patients may consider,” said Assemblymember Low.

According to the California Health Care Foundation, enough opioids are prescribed in a single year in California for every person in the state to medicate themselves around the clock for a month. Moreover, according to CDC, as many as 50,000 Americans died of an opioid overdose in 2016 - an increase of 28 % over the prior year. The death rates exceed those at the height of the AIDS epidemic.

AB 888 is strongly supported by California Acupuncture community. Rona Ma, President of The California Acupuncture and Traditional Medicine Association (CalATMA), said, “CalATMA is proud to support AB 888, which would help fight opioid crisis by promoting evidence-based pain management alternatives, such as acupuncture.”

“The introduction of AB 888 comes shortly after Assemblymember Low brought together acupuncturists from across the state, calling for the unification of our once fragmented profession. Clearly, Assemblymember Low has become a fierce advocate for both patients and the acupuncture profession. If Governor Jerry Brown is the ‘Father of California Acupuncture’ for legalization acupuncture, then Assemblymember Low is the ‘Uncle of California Acupuncture’ for his work expanding access to it,” continued Ma.

Michael Fox, CalATMA Public Relations Chair, also pointed out that the efficacy of acupuncture for pain management is well-known, and it is recommended by the American College of Physicians as a first-line for lower-back pain.

AB 888 would ensure that patients receive clinical information about the advantages and concerns associated with opioids - as well as the availability of non-pharmacological options - directly from their health professional, allowing them to receive medically accurate advice that has been tailored to their specific treatment plan.

The bill, which now moves to the State Senate, also recognizes that as recognition of the need for non-pharmacological treatment availability continues to grow, California must continue to explore mechanisms for ensuring equal access to these evidence-based therapies.