



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 09 2011

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am signing Assembly Bill 604, which allows qualified entities to apply directly to the Department of Public Health to provide hypodermic needle and syringe exchanges where rapid spread of HIV and other diseases is likely. The legislation authorizes the department to approve applicants, only after holding a public comment period, consulting with local public health and local law enforcement officers, and carefully balancing both concerns and benefits.

The Department of Public Health will issue regulations to clarify the application process and criteria. I am directing the department to administer AB 604 in a constrained way, working closely not only with local health officers and police chiefs, but with neighborhood associations as well. I believe that AB 604 can reduce the spread of communicable diseases and the suffering they cause and, at the same time, respect public safety and local preference.

Sincerely,


Edmund G. Brown Jr.