



P.O. Box 8506
Redlands, CA 92375

August 31, 2014

Hon. Governor Edmund "Jerry" G. Brown, Jr.
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: 916-558-3160

Re: PLEASE SIGN AB 966 (BONTA), 4TH TIME LEGISLATURE HAS AUTHORIZED CONDOMS TO PREVENT HIV/AIDS AND STDs IN PRISONS

Dear Governor Brown:

The California Academy of Preventive Medicine (CAPM) has endorsed AB 966 (Bonta) and urges that it be signed into law. CAPM is the state medical specialty society for physicians in the fields of public health and prevention.

Last year, you vetoed the similarly intentioned AB 999 by the same author, apparently because you felt you did not need legislation to implement a condom program in prisons, having put a successful pilot program in place at Solano State Prison in 2011. However, no further programs have been initiated since then. **AB 966 does not preempt executive authority, but merely creates timelines for implementing such programs within 5 years. This is the fourth time the Legislature has pass similar legislation, showing a clear and persistent intent to get this public health measure completed. It is time for executive support and for the beginning of full implementation.**

All authorities acknowledge that sexual activity occurs in prisons, and some of it is consensual or could involve negotiations about condom use. California's state prisoners have been denied access to condoms, which increases the risk of transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. When inmates are released, infections acquired in prison are passed on to spouses and partners in the general community, and contribute to our epidemics of HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Condom availability would decrease the illnesses and deaths related to sexual activity that has always occurred, and would save medical expenses by the CDCR. Concerns about contraband are irrelevant, because although condoms have been used to smuggle drugs into prisons, they have not been used to smuggle anything out of prisons.

The 2011 evaluation of the Solano pilot program showed that confidential availability of condoms from no-charge vending machines did not cause any security or safety problems. A statewide program would be cost-effective, because prevention of only about 4 HIV cases per year would cover its cost. **Once again, please sign AB 966.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald O. Lyman, M.D." in a cursive script.

Donald O. Lyman, MD, DTPH
President, CAPM
(916) 485-5880