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California State Senate

SENATOR
JEFF STONE, PHARM.D.
TWENTY-EIGHTH SENATE DISTRICT



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PUBLIC SAFETY

September 19, 2017

Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Veto Request – Assembly Bill 208

Dear Governor Brown:

I am writing today to respectfully request that you veto Assembly Bill 208.

AB 208 eliminates the option of deferred entry of judgment in drug cases and replaces it with diversion while limiting drug treatment programs from 18-36 months down to 12-18 months.

While this bill may have been well intentioned, I believe AB 208 has missed the mark.

Currently, a defendant pleads guilty, enters a drug treatment program which includes 18 to 36 months of supervision, and upon the successful completion of that program, his or her charges are dismissed. If the program is not completed successfully, the guilty plea is entered and the defendant is sentenced accordingly. AB 208 turns this process on its head and eliminates the most powerful incentive for those to complete treatment.

It is also unclear how reducing the length of treatment and supervision of the drug treatment programs would have any positive impact. Reducing the required length of treatment might lead to more people completing their programs, but it also reduces the likelihood that those programs will actually have positive long-term outcomes for drug offenders. Completing the program is not the point, having a lasting, impactful, and positive outcome is the real goal which is greatly hindered by AB 208.

I thank you for your time to read this letter and am available to answer any questions if they arise. I can be contacted at (916) 651-4028.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Stone".

Jeff Stone
Senator, 28th District