



CALIFORNIA  
HIV / AIDS POLICY  
RESEARCH CENTERS

**END THE  
EPIDEMICS**

It's time to end the HIV, HCV & STD  
epidemics in California.

# Overview of the Current Political Landscape

# Recent Advancements in HIV, HCV, STDs, and Harm Reduction

- End the Epidemics community consensus statement and Newsom endorsement
- Federal plans to end the HIV epidemic, viral hepatitis elimination plan, and STD plan
- Significant increase in federal funding for HIV prevention and treatment
- \$15 million ongoing state funding for HIV, HCV, and STD prevention and treatment
- \$15.2 million one time state funding for harm reduction staffing and technical assistance
- AB 2077 makes syringe possession legal, also new health and safety code includes pipes and other drug paraphernalia



# Political barriers to harm reduction

- As harm reduction programs have become more pervasive opposition has grown
- Stigma and xenophobia are alive and well
- Makes it hard for programs to focus on providing services, lack of safety for participants
- New data from CDPH shows that many counties facing the most opposition are also those most at risk for outbreaks of HIV/HCV

**IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY!**

**Sean Morgan:**

- ✓ Proposed the ban on needle giveaways and supported the citizen lawsuit to stop the program
- ✓ Supported all efforts to clean up our streets, parks, and greenways
- ✓ Proposed solutions to get drug addicts the help they need instead of enabling their disease
- ✓ Endorsed by Chico Police Officers and Firefighters

  

**VOTE SEAN MORGAN FOR NEEDLE FREE STREETS AND PARKS**

# Impact of COVID-19

- Legislature required to limit bills due to shortened session
- \$54 billion budget shortfall
- Public health staff reassigned to COVID-19 response, stretching an already stretched workforce
  - Funding distribution was slow as a result
- Prevention, testing, and treatment services reduced or suspended
- Widespread unemployment, housing instability, substance use and mental health issues, isolation, and increased overdose deaths
- COVID-19 put a spotlight on the health disparities that have always existed, laying bare the gaps and racism in our system.

# 2020 Election

- Biden administration will likely face a divided government
- ACA likely to stay intact, but big improvements unlikely
- Biden administration better on LGBTQ rights, immigration, criminal justice, etc.
- Biden administration promised to end HIV epidemic by 2025, but main public health focus will be on controlling COVID-19
- Federal COVID-19 relief bill will be critical for state and local governments to avoid budget shortfalls, likely divided Congress will make this challenging
- CA has a Democratic majority controlled legislature but significant budget deficit remains

# Looking Ahead

- ETE has restructured with a renewed focus on prioritizing racial justice
  - New formal structure focused on centering Black and Brown leadership
  - Commitment to dismantling systemic racism in public health
- Need to identify priorities to maintain progress on HIV, HCV, STDs, and harm reduction during COVID-19 pandemic given new economic and political reality
- Securing new state revenue will likely be difficult, but some progress possible through legislation and administrative changes
- Meeting today provides opportunity to discuss challenges and share priorities; the meeting summary will be shared with key stakeholders, including state leadership and End the Epidemics coalition, to inform 2021 policy priorities