



# CONSUMER ATTORNEYS OF CALIFORNIA

*Seeking Justice for All*

## Bill goes to governor requiring doctors on probation for sex crimes and other serious offenses to alert patients

CAOC-backed SB 1448 lifts the veil of secrecy that has put patients at risk

**SACRAMENTO (Aug. 31, 2018)** – A measure that would require doctors to notify their patients if they're placed on probation for serious offenses like sexual misconduct or drug abuse won final Legislative approval today and is headed to the desk of Gov. Jerry Brown.

Senate Bill 1448 by Sen. Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo) will lift the veil of secrecy that has allowed some physicians to hide serious misconduct for decades, putting their patients at risk.

The case against Olympic team doctor Larry Nassar, who was convicted after decades of abusing the athletes under his care, highlights the need to protect patients. More recently, Dr. George Tyndall, a USC gynecologist, was accused of conducting inappropriate pelvic exams on students.

SB 1448 will require doctors placed on probation after July 2019 to notify their patients about prior to the patient's first visit. The bill only applies for the following serious offenses:

1. Sexual abuse, misconduct or relations with a patient or client.
2. Drug or alcohol abuse that impairs the ability of the licensee to practice safely.
3. Criminal conviction involving harm to patient safety or health.
4. Inappropriate prescribing resulting in patient harm and five or more years of probation.

The bill would apply to physicians and surgeons licensed by the Medical Board of California, the California Board of Podiatric Medicine, and the Osteopathic Medical Board of California; doctors licensed by the state's Naturopathic Medicine Committee; and practitioners licensed by the state Board of Chiropractic Examiners and licensees of the California Acupuncture Board.

About 140,000 physicians and surgeons are licensed to practice in the state by the Medical Board of California. The board revokes the licenses of about 108 doctors each year for misconduct. But the board also negotiates probation for about 124 doctors annually, allowing such physicians to keep practicing. This information isn't secret, and it's available to patients — if they know where to look. But most people wouldn't even think of searching the Medical Board's website.

SB 1448 is supported by Consumer Attorneys of California, the Center for Public Interest Law, Consumer Federation of California, Consumer Watchdog and Consumers Union.

*Consumer Attorneys of California is a professional organization of plaintiffs' attorneys representing consumers seeking accountability against wrongdoers in cases involving personal injury, product liability, environmental degradation and other causes.*

**For more information:**

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