



## Senator Scott Wiener, 11<sup>th</sup> Senate District

### Senate Bill 932 - Rapid STI Testing

#### SUMMARY

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Senate Bill 932 would authorize an HIV counselor to perform a rapid sexually transmitted infection (STI) test, or any combination HIV/HCV/STI test, as specified, in addition to the HIV/HCV tests they are already authorized to perform.

This bill would also require HIV counselors, who are already receiving HIV counseling training courses, to also receive a training course that has been certified by the Office of AIDS.

#### BACKGROUND/EXISTING LAW

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Under existing law, the State Department of Public Health licenses, registers, and regulates clinical laboratories and various clinical laboratory personnel. Existing law authorizes an HIV counselor who receives specified training and works in specified counseling and testing sites to perform HIV, hepatitis C virus (HCV), or combined HIV/HCV tests, including performing skin punctures for purposes of withdrawing blood for purposes of these tests, as specified.

In late 2014, a novel rapid point-of-care syphilis test was FDA-approved and Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) waived. This rapid syphilis test is comparatively inexpensive, simple to use with minimal training, requires no additional laboratory instruments, and produces a result in approximately 10 minutes. Use of this rapid test will allow for patients to be notified of their syphilis exposure faster so they can consult with their physician on appropriate treatment.

#### PROBLEM

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According to the California Department of Public Health, STIs are at their highest levels in 30 years and continue to climb. In 2017, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that STI cases are increasing across all regions of the state with the

highest rates among young people ages 15-24, African-Americans, and gay and bisexual men.

HIV counselors should be fully utilized in the fight to prevent this upsurge of sexually transmitted infections. At this moment, they are constrained by only testing patients for HIV and HCV infections. However, HIV counselors are already subject to highly regulated clinical standards when testing patients for potential HIV or HCV infections. HIV counselors should become a one stop shop when testing for other infectious diseases as well.

Recent developments in the field prove that rapid STI tests provided at the point-of care can make testing accessible in locations with limited laboratory facilities and greatly reduce the number of persons who do not return for their test results. HIV counselors should be authorized to use such FDA-approved and CLIA-waived technology testing for the broad range of sexually transmitted infections.

#### SOLUTION

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Senate Bill 932 would permit HIV counselors who are authorized to perform any CLIA-waived HIV or HCV test to also perform skin punctures and rapid STI tests for any combination of sexually transmitted infections. Allowing HIV counselors to administer a rapid STI test for any sexually transmitted infection would increase the number of persons with STIs who receive counseling and referrals, help address the problem of clients failing to return for test results, and decrease the risk of further transmission stemming from undiagnosed infections.

#### SUPPORT

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San Francisco AIDS Foundation (*co-sponsor*)  
APLA Health (*co-sponsor*)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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