



## California SB 497 (Wiener): What You Need to Know

### What is SB 497?

SB 497 strengthens California's protections towards gender-affirming health care by protecting patients, providers, and supporters from being targeted by laws in other states. It ensures that California health care systems, providers, and agencies cannot share medical records, prescription data, or cooperate with investigations that seek to criminalize or punish gender-affirming care. By adding strict confidentiality rules and criminal penalties for misuse of prescription monitoring data, SB 497 helps prevent harassment, legal retaliation, and violations of medical privacy.

### Key Protections of the Bill

**Limiting out-of-state legal interference:** The bill would prevent healthcare providers, insurers, contractors, or employers from disclosing medical information or cooperating with investigations from other states when those investigations are based on laws that conflict with California's protections for gender-affirming care.

### Tightening control over prescription data sharing

**(CURES):** California's prescription monitoring database (CURES) could not be used to support interstate investigations against people obtaining or providing legally protected health care. The bill also prohibits agencies or individuals from expending resources to assist out-of-state investigations on this basis.

**Criminal penalties for misuse:** SB 497 introduces misdemeanor-level penalties for any unauthorized access to or disclosure of information from CURES, California's prescription drug monitoring database especially when done to assist out-of-state investigations targeting gender-affirming care. The bill makes it clear that out-of-state law enforcement cannot access CURES data without a valid California-issued warrant or court order, adding an important layer of privacy protection. This ensures that sensitive prescription information remains secure within California's jurisdiction and cannot be used to criminalize patients, providers or supporters of gender-affirming health care.



### Why it Matters

SB 497 protects transgender people, families, and health care providers in California from out-of-state attempts to punish or investigate gender-affirming care. SB 497 helps prevent harassment, legal retaliation, and violations of medical privacy. It blocks the sharing of medical or prescription data for those purposes, adds criminal penalties for violations, and ensures these protections take effect immediately once signed — reinforcing California's commitment to being a state of refuge for those seeking affirming care.