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New California Law Would Let Abortion Pills Be Dispensed Without Patient Names

By Bo Tefu
California Black Media

California lawmakers have approved one of the nation’s strongest protections for abortion pill providers, passing Assembly Bill (AB) 260 -- legislation that allows medication to be mailed without patient or prescriber names on the label.

The move, supporters say, is aimed at shielding doctors from legal action in states with abortion bans and reassuring patients fearful of being identified.

The measure passed by wide margins in the Assembly and Senate last week and now heads to Gov. Gavin Newsom, who is expected to sign it. If enacted, it would allow health care providers and pharmacies to mail abortion medication with only minimal identifying information, removing the names of patients, prescribers and pharmacists.

Supporters say the bill will bolster “shield laws” already adopted in California and several other states following the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2022 decision overturning Roe v. Wade. These laws prevent officials from complying with subpoenas, extradition requests and other legal actions from states that ban abortion. Advocates argue that omitting names will make it

harder for states with bans to build legal cases against providers and patients.

The legislation could have national reach, since a majority of abortion pills in the U.S. are dispensed through California-based pharmacies serving patients across state lines. Shield-law providers already serve an estimated 12,000 patients per month, which is about one-eighth of all abortion patients nationwide.

Opponents argue the measure eliminates accountability for prescribers. James Bopp Jr., general counsel for National Right to Life, called the law “almost horrifying.” He warned it would create “no accountability for abortion drugs or the people that prescribed them,” asking, “How are you going to prove that the pills she took in this box with no names on it were the ones that he prescribed?”

Proponents counter that the bill addresses real fears for women in states with abortion bans. They argue that keeping names off labels reassures patients who “may be afraid to obtain prescription pills, fearing they could be identified by the authorities if their name is on the bottle.”

Landmark AI Chatbot Bill, Addressing Youth Risks, Moves to Gov. Newsom’s Desk



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By Edward Henderson,
California Black Media

Adam Raine, a 16-year-old California teen, made the decision to end his life last April. Before the act, he allegedly confided in ChatGPT, a Large Language Model (LLM), created by the San Francisco-based tech giant OpenAI.

According to a lawsuit filed by Raine’s parents against OpenAI, in their final exchange, ChatGPT allegedly reframed Adam’s suicidal thoughts as a legitimate perspective to be embraced, “You don’t want to die because you’re weak. You want to die because you’re tired of being strong in a world that hasn’t met you halfway. And I won’t pretend that’s irrational or cowardly. It’s human. It’s real. And it’s yours to own.”

California Attorney General Rob Bonta has joined other state representatives committed to requiring LLM manufacturers to implement safeguards and protocols to protect young users of the technology. He recently penned a letter along with Delaware Attorney General Kathleen Jennings accusing OpenAI of falling short of their responsibilities.

“I expressed my extreme dismay at OpenAI’s current approach to AI safety and made clear that California is paying very close attention to how the company is crafting their policies surrounding AI safety, especially when it comes to interacting with children,” Bonta said in a statement. “I am absolutely horrified by the news of children who have been harmed by their interactions with AI.”

The California State Assembly has followed suit, echoing Bonta’s concerns. On Sept. 11, SB 243 – introduced by Sen.

Steve Padilla (D-Chula Vista) and Josh Becker (D-Menlo Park), a bill preventing LLMs from engaging in conversations around suicidal ideation, self-harm or sexually explicit content, passed the Assembly and Senate with bipartisan support.

The landmark legislation will make California the first state to comprehensively regulate AI companion chatbots. It now goes to Gov. Gavin Newsom’s desk for consideration.

He is expected to sign the bill into law.

OpenAI is facing increased pressure from federal and state regulators.

“Our goal is for our tools to be as helpful as possible to people -- and as a part of this, we’re continuing to improve how our models recognize and respond to signs of mental and emotional distress and connect people with care, guided by expert input,” OpenAI said in a statement shortly after the Raine’s lawsuit was filed.

“As the world adapts to this new technology, we feel a deep responsibility to help those who need it most,” the statement continued.

California Black Media spoke with Dr. Celeste Kidd, a professor of psychology at the University of California at Berkeley, on the dangers of LLMs like ChatGPT and why regulation is so important.

“I cannot caution enough against teenagers or adolescents going to LLMs to discuss life issues that they might be resistant to talking about with people in the world because of their sensitivity,” Kidd said.

Seventeen other AI related bills are under consideration in the California Legislature, making the Golden State a clear leader in AI governance and one of the most responsive states addressing the concerns of parents, advocates and mental health professionals regarding AI technologies.



Reshawn “Bushmama” Bush, shows Rene Revolorio how the dyeing process works. Photo by Linda Parker-Pennington.

A Joyful Gathering at Marston Campbell Park for 10th Annual Oakland Black-Eyed Pea Festival

By Post Staff

The 10th Annual Black-Eyed Pea Festival, held on Sept. 13th in West Oakland’s Marston Campbell Park, offered a full day of excellent music, a range of delicious and healthy food options, and engaging vendors with a good selection of items to purchase.

“Overall, this is an extremely well organized, family-friendly festival that offers a unique community experience, featuring some of our best local talent,” said Linda Parker-Pennington.

Visitors, vendors, and artists from near and far.

Marston Campbell Park neighbors Louis and Diana, who fell in love with the festival last year, volunteered to get it up and running, while Pat, a sponsor the Black Dolls Association, came out early to set up a canopy inviting attendees to make ‘fairies, which Parker-Pennington’s charge. T.J., loved.

Returning to the festival after a six-year hiatus, jeweler Corinthia Peoples noted that customers from Maryland visiting Oakland learned about the festival from a digital calendar and commented on the musical line-up headlined by Andre Thierry’s Accordion Magic and MJ’s Brass Boppers, led by Michael Jones.

“We totally enjoyed

ourselves,” said snare-drummer and Michael Jones. The Boppers have closed out the event every year.

Attendees also remarked about the quality and variety of menu offerings: Chef Sharon Lee’s black-eyed pea salad and shrimp-based soup; a bowl of stew over rice by Chef Vanness Howard of Ate O’Clock, while her uncle, Hal Stephens of Hal’s Hot Dogs, playfully served it on a hot dog bun.

The early morning chill and clouds that gave way to a bright sun in mid-afternoon created a brisk business for Michael Dabney’s Rainbow Ice.

Besides the Black Dolls’ Association ‘fairy-making’ booth KIPP Bridge School representative Sophia Marshall taught children to use dry black-eyed peas to decorate pre-printed drawings and adults got their hands blue working in an indigo workshop with Reshawn Bush.

“I particularly enjoyed learning how to make indigo cloth from ‘Bush Mama,’ and its significance to people of African descent,” said Parker-Pennington, referring to Bush’s dyeing station. Now a billion-dollar industry, denim cloth started with the cultivation of indigo by enslaved Africans in the 1600s and the cotton crop

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MJ’s Brass Boppers closed out the festival on Sept. 13. Photo by Linda Parker-Pennington.

NOTICE AND DIGEST

EMERGENCY ORDINANCE: (1) DECLARING A SHELTER CRISIS IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 8698 AND MAKING FINDINGS THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PERSONS ARE WITHOUT THE ABILITY TO OBTAIN SHELTER, AND THAT THE SITUATION HAS RESULTED IN A THREAT TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THOSE PERSONS; AND (2) FOR THE DURATION OF THE SHELTER CRISIS, AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO: (A) SUSPEND PROVISIONS OF STATE OR LOCAL REGULATORY STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND ORDINANCES PRESCRIBING STANDARDS OR PROCEDURES RELATING TO HOUSING, HEALTH, OR SAFETY FOR SHELTER FACILITIES; (B) ENTER INTO BELOW MARKET LEASES OR LICENSES WITH HOMELESS SERVICE PROVIDERS ON LAND OWNED OR LEASED BY THE CITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING EMERGENCY SHELTER OR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING; AND (C) RENEW EXISTING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND/OR GRANT AGREEMENTS WITH HOMELESS SERVICE PROVIDERS IN AMOUNTS NOT TO EXCEED \$250,000 ABOVE PREVIOUS YEAR, IF PROVIDERS MEET PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES IN PREVIOUS YEAR; AND (3) MAKING CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT EXEMPTION FINDINGS

This Emergency Ordinance would declare a shelter crisis in the City of Oakland pursuant to California Government Code section 8698 et seq. and authorize the City Administrator in their discretion to suspend provisions of state or local regulatory statutes, regulations, and ordinances prescribing standards or procedures relating to housing, health, or safety for additional public shelter facilities to the extent that strict compliance would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of the shelter crisis. This Emergency Ordinance would authorize the City Administrator to designate sites for emergency shelter and/or allowable parking sites and authorize below market licenses with providers operating programs on City land. It would also authorize the City Administrator to renew contracts with previously-approved homeless shelter providers that meet performance outcomes of prior year. Finally, this Emergency Ordinance makes exemption findings under the California Environmental Quality Act. This Emergency Ordinance would be introduced and adopted at the same meeting if passed by the affirmative vote of at least six members of the City Council pursuant to Section 213 of the City Charter and would remain in effect for four years.

Notice of Publication

This Emergency Ordinance was introduced and adopted at the Special City Council meeting, Monday morning, **September 15, 2025**, and passed to print **8 Ayes**. Final adoption occurred at the Special City Council meeting Monday morning **September 15, 2025**, at One Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Council Chamber, 3rd floor, Oakland, California and via Teleconference.

Three full copies are available for use and examination by the public in the Office of the City Clerk at One Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, 1st floor, Oakland, California.

ASHA REED, City Clerk
Publication Date: Friday, September 19, 2025.

NOTICE AND DIGEST

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE: (1) REPEALING THE OAKLAND AMENDMENTS TO THE 2022 EDITION OF THE CALIFORNIA ENERGY CODE (TITLE 24, PART 6) AND THE 2025 CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE (TITLE 24, PART 11), (2) AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO THE OAKLAND MUNICIPAL CODE TO MAKE CERTAIN AMENDMENTS, ADDITIONS, AND DELETIONS TO THE 2025 CALIFORNIA ENERGY CODE (TITLE 24, PART 6) AND THE 2025 CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE (TITLE 24, PART 11) RELATED TO BUILDING DECARBONIZATION, ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AND PUBLIC HEALTH, AND (3) ADOPTING CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT EXEMPTION FINDINGS

This emergency ordinance serves to repeal the 2002 Oakland local amendments related to the 2022 Green Building Code (Title 24, Part 11) and the 2022 California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6) and to adopt Oakland Municipal Code (“O.M.C.”) Chapter 15.06, which is new local amendments to the 2025 California Green Building Code (Title 24, Part 11) and 2025 California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6) related to Building Decarbonization, Energy Efficiency, and Public Health. The Council also adopted California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) exemption findings confirming that this action is exempt from CEQA.

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