



New Hampshire Senate

## News Release

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### **Senate approves House changes to remove prior authorization for substance abuse treatment**

Concord, NH - Today, the Senate moved to concur with the House, passing SB 532, which would follow the American Society of Addiction Medicine [ASAM] criteria and allow those addicted to opioids or heroin to seek treatment immediately, without needing prior authorization from insurers. This bill will now go to the Governor's desk.

Senators Nancy Stiles (R-Hampton) and Senator Russell Prescott (R-Kingston) issued the following statements on the passage of the bill.

"This legislation, which was previously passed by both bodies, has been discussed at length with all of the stakeholders at the table and the final product will remove the problematic waiting period between an individual seeking substance abuse treatment and their ability to receive care," said Senator Nancy Stiles (R-Hampton). "This bill will allow those seeking treatment for a substance abuse condition to be treated by a clinician who will provide an appropriate level of care following the ASAM criteria for up to 24 hours before prior authorization by the insurer is required. We heard testimony that individuals with an addiction problem often change their mind while they wait for prior authorization for substance abuse treatment, and by eliminating this requirement, we allow more people to access care at the critical moments when they ask for help."

"I have heard from members of my community that there are only a few precious moments when an individual struggling with addiction decides and seeks treatment and any limitations to their ability to begin treatment may cause them to change their mind," said Senator Russell Prescott (R-Kingston). "This bill allows our clinicians to offer the best treatment for those suffering with substance abuse without being prohibited by a lengthy authorization process. Removing the restrictions on our clinicians allows them to react immediately to help those in need while the authorization process is on-going."

"I am proud of the Senate's support of this legislation which will provide an important stepping stone to address the need for immediate access to substance abuse treatment and for curbing the heroin and opioid crisis facing all of our communities statewide," added Prescott.

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