
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 553 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY FABRIZIO, MURT, V. BROWN, COHEN, KIM, CORBIN,
THOMAS, HEFFLEY, BAKER, DIGIROLAMO, MILLARD, HENNESSEY,
NEILSON, KIRKLAND, DUSH, SONNEY, VEREB, SCHWEYER, BIZZARRO,
CALTAGIRONE, ACOSTA, O'BRIEN, GIBBONS, D. COSTA, KINSEY,
LONGIETTI, YOUNGBLOOD, KAVULICH, PASHINSKI, PAYNE,
SCHLOSSBERG, PHILLIPS-HILL, McNEILL, READSHAW, BULLOCK,
MARSICO, MAHONEY, MAJOR, FARINA, GINGRICH, BRADFORD, SCHEMEL,
BISHOP, DAVIS, KLUNK, ELLIS, DRISCOLL, KORTZ, EVERETT, WARD,
B. MILLER, LEWIS, QUINN, HARHART AND R. BROWN,
OCTOBER 21, 2015

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
OCTOBER 21, 2015

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of October 2015 as "National Medicine
2 Abuse Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Over-the-counter and prescription medicines approved
4 by the Food and Drug Administration have been determined to be
5 safe and effective when used properly; and

6 WHEREAS, The misuse or abuse of these medicines can be
7 extremely dangerous and produce serious side effects; and

8 WHEREAS, The Office of National Drug Control Policy reports
9 that medicine abuse is the fastest-growing drug problem in the
10 United States, and the Centers for Disease Control and
11 Prevention (CDC) has classified medicine abuse as an epidemic;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, According to a report by the Trust for America's

1 Health (TFAH), prescription drug abuse has quickly become a top
2 public health concern, as prescription drug-related deaths now
3 outnumber those from heroin and cocaine combined, and drug
4 overdose deaths exceed motor vehicle-related deaths in 29
5 states; and

6 WHEREAS, The United States Substance Abuse and Mental Health
7 Services Administration's 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and
8 Health found that over the past decade, the nonmedical use of
9 prescription drugs among persons 12 years of age or older rose
10 from 1.9 million in 2002 to 11.1 million in 2011; and

11 WHEREAS, According to the CDC, nationally, sales of
12 prescription painkillers per capita have quadrupled since 1999,
13 and the number of fatal poisonings due to prescription
14 painkillers has also quadrupled; and

15 WHEREAS, According to the Johns Hopkins Center for Injury
16 Research and Policy, 50 Americans die each day from prescription
17 drug overdoses and more than 6 million suffer from prescription
18 drug abuse disorders; and

19 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania has the 14th highest drug overdose
20 mortality rate in the United States, with 15.3 per 100,000
21 people suffering drug overdose fatalities, according to a new
22 TFAH report, Prescription Drug Abuse: Strategies to Stop the
23 Epidemic; and

24 WHEREAS, In view of this, a nationwide prevention and
25 education campaign has been launched by the Community Anti-Drug
26 Coalitions of America, a national organization that represents
27 5,000 antidrug coalitions nationwide, along with the Consumer
28 Healthcare Products Association, to provide local coalitions
29 with tools, training and outreach strategies to engage and
30 educate parents, grandparents, teachers, law enforcement

1 officials, retailers, doctors and other health care
2 professionals about the potential harms of over-the-counter
3 medicine abuse; and

4 WHEREAS, In addition, the Drug Enforcement Administration and
5 many State and local law enforcement agencies have established
6 drug disposal programs, commonly referred to as take-back
7 programs, to facilitate the collection and destruction of
8 unused, unwanted or expired medications, thereby helping to take
9 outdated or unused medications off household shelves and out of
10 the reach of children and teenagers; and

11 WHEREAS, "National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month" promotes
12 the message that over-the-counter and prescription medicines are
13 to be taken only as labeled or prescribed and that using such
14 medicines to "get high" or in large doses can cause serious or
15 life-threatening consequences; and

16 WHEREAS, Observance of "National Medicine Abuse Awareness
17 Month" should be encouraged at the national, state and local
18 levels to increase awareness of the abuse of medicines; and

19 WHEREAS, Educating the public about the dangers of medicine
20 abuse, encouraging parents to talk about medicine abuse with
21 their teenagers, mobilizing parents to safeguard their home
22 medicine cabinets and promoting abuse prevention are critical
23 components of what must be a multipronged effort to curb over-
24 the-counter and prescription medicine abuse; therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
26 month of October 2015 as "National Medicine Abuse Awareness
27 Month" in Pennsylvania and urge communities to carry out
28 appropriate programs and activities to educate parents and
29 youths of the potential dangers associated with medicine abuse.