
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 955 Session of
2014

INTRODUCED BY FABRIZIO, COHEN, HENNESSEY, READSHAW, SONNEY,
DAVIS, V. BROWN, McNEILL, BIZZARRO, MIRABITO, LONGIETTI,
KIRKLAND, BAKER, J. HARRIS, CALTAGIRONE, SCHLOSSBERG, THOMAS,
O'BRIEN, YOUNGBLOOD, McGEEHAN, MARSICO, GIBBONS, FLECK, ROSS,
NEUMAN, FRANKEL, ROCK, McCARTER, SABATINA, MURT, GOODMAN,
CONKLIN, LUCAS, VEREB, NEILSON, KORTZ, R. BROWN, FREEMAN,
HANNA, DeLUCA, KIM, PARKER, PASHINSKI, FLYNN AND MAHONEY,
AUGUST 5, 2014

INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,
AUGUST 5, 2014

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of August 2014 as "National Medicine Abuse
2 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
14 Health (TFAH), prescription drug abuse has quickly become a top

1 public health concern, as prescription drug-related deaths now
2 outnumber those from heroin and cocaine combined, and drug
3 overdose deaths exceed motor vehicle-related deaths in 29
4 states; and

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

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

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

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

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

1 professionals about the potential harms of over-the-counter
2 medicine abuse; and

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

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

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

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

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
25 month of August 2014 as "National Medicine Abuse Awareness
26 Month" in Pennsylvania, and urge communities to carry out
27 appropriate programs and activities to educate parents and youth
28 of the potential dangers associated with medicine abuse.