

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS, LIFE-SAVING MEDICINE, &
PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM ADDICTION

WHEREAS, under current law, doctors, nurses, and healthcare providers risk criminal prosecution and loss of license simply for providing life-saving medical intervention to patients who consume illegal substances in their presence;¹

WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health data showed that overdose deaths in Massachusetts increased by 8.8% from 2020 to 2021, with 2,290 fatalities statewide in 2021 alone;²

WHEREAS, multiple statewide medical organizations including the Massachusetts Medical Society, Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery, and National Association of Social Workers Massachusetts have endorsed supervised consumption care sites, as a proven and effective tool for saving lives and connecting people who use drugs to a range of medical, behavioral health, and substance use disorder services;

WHEREAS, overdose prevention sites have been well-documented to increase a participant's access to detox and treatment, reduce the spread of infectious diseases including HIV and Hepatitis C, and reduce public consumption of drugs, discarding of syringes in neighborhoods, and community overdose deaths;³

WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Harm Reduction Commission, established by Chapter 208 of the Acts of 2018, thoroughly reviewed the scientific literature on overdose prevention sites and recommended their adoption as an effective harm reduction tool;⁴

WHEREAS, State Representatives Dylan Fernandes and Marjorie Decker and State Senator Julian Cyr have introduced legislation, "An Act Relative to Preventing Overdose Deaths And Increasing Access to Treatment," in the Massachusetts Legislature to establish a legal and regulatory framework allowing cities and towns to opt-in to allow the opening of overdose prevention sites locally; and

¹ <https://www.massmed.org/advocacy/state-advocacy/sif-report-2017/>

² <https://www.mass.gov/news/massachusetts-rate-of-opioid-related-overdose-deaths-increased-88-percent-in-2021-compared-to-2020>

³ https://icer.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/ICER_SIF_Final-Evidence-Report_010821.pdf

⁴ <https://www.mass.gov/doc/harm-reduction-commission-report-3-1-2019/download>

WHEREAS, Legislation has been favorably reported out by the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery, but not yet passed the full House or Senate;

LET IT BE RESOLVED:

that the Massachusetts Democratic State Committee calls upon our State Legislators to draft and pass legislation decriminalizing life-saving medical intervention by doctors, nurses & healthcare providers statewide, so no healthcare provider is prevented from saving lives under their supervision under any circumstances,

and that the Massachusetts Democratic State Committee calls for legislation filed by Representatives Fernandes and Decker and Senator Cyr be passed without delay.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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