

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 26

Introduced by Assembly Member Levine
(Coauthor: Senator McGuire)

February 19, 2015

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 26—Relative to Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 26, as introduced, Levine. Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim the month of March 2015 as Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month and encourage all citizens to actively participate in prevention programs and activities, and to safely store and dispose of their medications on a continual basis.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Drug overdose was the leading cause of injury and
2 death in 2012, and among people 25 to 64 years of age, drug
3 overdose caused more deaths than motor vehicle traffic crashes;
4 and
5 WHEREAS, Every day in the United States, 120 people die as
6 a result of drug overdose, and another 6,748 are treated in
7 emergency departments for the misuse or abuse of drugs; and
8 WHEREAS, In 2013, drug overdoses in the United States caused
9 43,982 deaths and 22,767, or 52 percent, of those deaths were from
10 prescription drugs; and
11 WHEREAS, In 2011, 2.5 million emergency department visits
12 were related to the misuse or abuse of pharmaceuticals; and

1 WHEREAS, Nonmedical use of prescription painkillers costs
2 health insurers up to \$72.5 billion annually in direct health care
3 costs; and

4 WHEREAS, Overdose deaths involving opioid pain relievers
5 now exceed the number of deaths from heroin and cocaine
6 combined; and

7 WHEREAS, As many as 70 percent of people who abuse
8 prescription drugs get them from a relative or friend instead of a
9 doctor; and

10 WHEREAS, During the last National Prescription Drug
11 Take-Back Day, the United States Drug Enforcement
12 Administration (DEA) collected 617,150 pounds (309 tons) of
13 unwanted medication on Saturday, September 27, 2014; and

14 WHEREAS, The 2014 National Drug Control Strategy listed
15 four interventions to reduce prescription drug abuse, one of which
16 was to provide safe drug disposal by increasing return and
17 take-back programs. We support California acquiring a sustainably
18 funded and well publicized statewide medication take-back system
19 that is much more convenient to consumers than the current
20 one-day events or disposal at hazardous waste facilities; and

21 WHEREAS, The National Coalition Against Prescription Drug
22 Abuse, law enforcement, community-based organizations, alcohol
23 and other drug service providers, and civic and business leaders
24 coordinate Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month activities
25 in California to engage our citizens in demonstrating their
26 commitment to prevention campaigns and education aimed at
27 raising awareness about the abuse and misuse of prescription drugs,
28 promoting prescription drug safe storage and disposal, and using
29 medications only as prescribed; and

30 WHEREAS, Families, schools, businesses, faith-based
31 communities, law enforcement, medical professionals, county and
32 local governments, health care practitioners, and pharmacists in
33 the state, and the general public will demonstrate their commitment
34 to the prevention of prescription medication abuse by participating
35 in activities intended to highlight local efforts during the month
36 of March; and

37 WHEREAS, The Legislature supports National Prescription
38 Drug Take-Back Day as declared by the DEA, and encourages
39 residents to locate their local collection site and safely dispose of

1 their accumulated unwanted and unused prescription drugs; now,
2 therefore, be it

3 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
4 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby declares March
5 2015 as Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month and encourages
6 all citizens to actively participate in prevention programs and
7 activities, and to safely store and dispose of their medications on
8 a continual basis; and be it further

9 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
10 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

O