

A RESOLUTION

To recognize the efforts and successes of the faith-based community in supporting and assisting individuals who are suffering from opioid and other drug abuse and addiction.

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Ohio:

WHEREAS, The ever-increasing number of cases of drug overdoses over the past several years, both in Ohio and throughout the United States, has been alarming and yet heartbreaking; and

WHEREAS, According to statistics published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, America has lost at least 568,699 of its citizens from 1999 through 2015 due to drug overdoses, mainly from opioid abuse, demonstrating a nationwide crisis so severe that the opioid epidemic was recently declared at the federal level to be a public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, During the period since 1999, the number of deaths caused by drug overdoses in America has been even higher than the number of American lives lost in various wars, as evidenced by military casualty data maintained by the United States Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs: in World War I - 116,516 casualties; in World War II - 405,399 casualties; in the Korean War - 36,574 casualties; in the Vietnam War - 58,220 casualties; in the Persian Gulf War - 383 casualties; and in the series of campaigns since 2001 known as the Global War on Terror – 5,368 casualties thus far; and

WHEREAS, In Ohio specifically, the escalating health crisis being caused by drug overdoses is evident from information gathered by the Ohio Department of Health, which reports that there were at least 4,050 overdose deaths in 2016 alone, while in comparison, there were 411 fatal overdoses in the state in the year 2000; and

WHEREAS, There have been numerous accounts of individuals who must be given emergency treatments on multiple occasions with drugs such as naloxone to counteract their overdoses, sometimes even within a single 24-hour period; and

WHEREAS, Similarly, there have been numerous reports indicating that coroners and morgues are reaching maximum capacity with respect to the availability of space to accommodate the high volume of fatalities resulting from drug overdoses; and

WHEREAS, The personal and social costs of the drug crisis are compounded when taking into consideration the economic toll that is incurred, as pointed out by researchers from the Ohio State University in a recent report in which it was estimated that the total annual cost of opioid abuse, addiction, and overdoses in 2015 ranged from \$6.6 to \$8.8 billion, an amount comparable to the \$8.2 billion expended from the General Revenue Fund and lottery profits for public education (K-12) for the same year; and

WHEREAS, In light of the harrowing impact of drug abuse and addiction on our society and the overwhelming strain that is being placed on our state's resources, we must accept that community involvement is desperately needed and be open to finding solutions that are not limited to actions that

focus solely on funding, education, medication, or social programs; and

WHEREAS, In our search for a means to overcome this tragic situation and to fill the unmet treatment needs of those who find themselves in such dire circumstances, it is of utmost importance to consider the value of the supports that are being made available by the faith-based community in assisting individuals who have been unable to escape the downward spiral of drug abuse and addiction; and

WHEREAS, The compassionate nature of the dedicated servants within the faith-based community and the new perspectives their advice and teachings bring to the lives of others have been shown to have high rates of success in empowering individuals to recover from their drug abuse and addiction without falling into relapse; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the House of Representatives of the 132nd General Assembly of the State of Ohio, in adopting this resolution, recognize the valiant efforts and great accomplishments of the faith-based community in offering its empathetic support and caring assistance to all who suffer from the devastating effects of opioid and other drug abuse and addiction and are seeking the sense of personal safety and comfort that comes from relying on the strength of a power greater than ourselves; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the House of Representatives of the 132nd General Assembly of the State of Ohio, express our wholehearted intent to consider legislation that would provide greater recognition to the faith-based community, including our recognition of its successes and commitment to combating opioid and other drug abuse and addiction; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to the Governor and the news media of Ohio.

Speaker _____ *of the House of Representatives.*

Adopted _____, 20____