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SENATE MEMORIAL 3

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2021

INTRODUCED BY

Pete Campos

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF RAISING AWARENESS OF FENTANYL
OVERDOSE DEATHS BE RECOGNIZED AND REQUESTING STATE AGENCIES TO
MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF THOSE DEATHS IN
NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is eighty to
one hundred times more potent than morphine; and

WHEREAS, fentanyl has been increasingly abused since its
approval for use in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the United States drug enforcement
administration issued a national alert regarding the dangers of
fentanyl and its threat to public safety; and

WHEREAS, since 2016, fentanyl and illicitly manufactured
fentanyl have been increasingly identified as causes of drug
overdose deaths; and

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1 WHEREAS, fentanyl is often disguised as prescription pain
2 medication such as oxycodone and hydrocodone or is laced into
3 heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine or 3,4-methylenedioxy-
4 methamphetamine; and

5 WHEREAS, thirty-three percent of patients show signs of
6 addiction or dependence after using an opioid treatment for two
7 months; and

8 WHEREAS, more than fifty percent of patients on chronic
9 pain opioid therapy for three months will still be on that
10 treatment five years later; and

11 WHEREAS, fentanyl overdose may cause hypoxia, leading to
12 coma, permanent brain damage or death; and

13 WHEREAS, in 2019, twenty-seven percent of the fentanyl and
14 fentanyl-related seizure samples profiled by the United States
15 drug enforcement administration contained a potentially lethal
16 dose of fentanyl; and

17 WHEREAS, just two milligrams of fentanyl may result in a
18 fatal overdose; and

19 WHEREAS, because such a small amount of fentanyl can lead
20 to death, fentanyl toxicology tests are expensive and take a
21 long time to process; and

22 WHEREAS, it can take months for an overdose to be directly
23 linked to fentanyl; and

24 WHEREAS, the United States drug enforcement administration
25 reported that the amount of fentanyl seized in New Mexico in

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1 2018 was enough to kill six hundred sixty million people; and

2 WHEREAS, in New Mexico, overdose deaths attributed to
3 fentanyl increased from thirteen percent in 2018 to twenty-one
4 percent in 2019, claiming the lives of one hundred twenty-seven
5 New Mexicans; and

6 WHEREAS, from 2014 to 2018, it is estimated that eighty-
7 eight percent of drug overdoses in New Mexico were
8 unintentional; and

9 WHEREAS, thirty-five percent of those overdoses were
10 caused by prescription drugs; forty percent were caused by
11 illicit drugs; and twenty-three percent were caused by a
12 combination of both prescription and illicit drugs,
13 collectively claiming the lives of two thousand five hundred
14 fifty-eight people; and

15 WHEREAS, any person in a position to assist someone
16 experiencing an opioid-related drug overdose can obtain an
17 opioid antagonist from a licensed prescriber; and

18 WHEREAS, naloxone is an opioid antagonist that can
19 prevent death from an opioid overdose and may require multiple
20 doses if someone is overdosing on fentanyl; and

21 WHEREAS, medication and behavioral therapies are effective
22 treatments for opioid addiction;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
24 OF NEW MEXICO that the importance of raising awareness of
25 fentanyl overdose deaths be recognized; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies, including the
2 department of health and the human services department, be
3 requested to make recommendations to the legislative health and
4 human services committee about methods to raise awareness of
5 and reduce fentanyl overdose deaths in the state; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
7 transmitted to the secretary of human services and the
8 secretary of health.