

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 3, 2010 AS "OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY" AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WHEREAS, the house of representatives supports state overdose prevention services; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, approximately four hundred people in New Mexico died of accidental drug overdoses, the majority of which were preventable; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, unintentional drug overdoses accounted for nine percent of life lost due to premature death in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, according to the department of health, New Mexico's prescription opiate and heroin-related drug overdose death rates are significantly higher than the national average; and

WHEREAS, state and local public health agencies have long supported effective overdose prevention programming; and

WHEREAS, since 2001, after the enactment of legislation authorizing the administration of opioid antagonists, naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid overdoses, has been distributed to people at high risk of overdose in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, naloxone is a critical component of any effective overdose prevention and response program; and

WHEREAS, participants in programs incorporating naloxone report an increased connection to safety and personal health information and resources; and

WHEREAS, the frequency of heroin use decreased among opioid users in a pilot study of naloxone distribution; and

WHEREAS, according to the department of health, about three hundred people reported using naloxone to save lives in 2008 alone; and

WHEREAS, the state legislature approved the passage of legislation in 2007 granting limited immunity from drug possession charges for witnesses who call 911 to save the life of an overdose victim; and

WHEREAS, families impacted by substance abuse should receive education on overdose prevention; and

WHEREAS, overdose prevention awareness is regarded as an important endeavor internationally, with August 31 being recognized as "International Overdose Awareness Day"; and

WHEREAS, drug-related overdose prevention services and programs are essential to saving lives in New Mexico;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 3, 2010 be recognized as "Overdose Awareness Day" at the house of representatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the director of the drug policy alliance and to

the harm reduction program manager at the department of health.