
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 659 Session of
2014

INTRODUCED BY HEFFLEY, COHEN, CALTAGIRONE, MACKENZIE,
DIGIROLAMO, BOBACK, V. BROWN, SCHLOSSBERG, MASSER, MILLARD,
CORBIN, GROVE, MILNE, TOEPEL, MENTZER, PICKETT, MURT, THOMAS,
BENNINGHOFF AND GRELL, FEBRUARY 24, 2014

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, FEBRUARY 24, 2014

A RESOLUTION

1 Establishing the task force on opiate prescription drug
2 proliferation and its impact on heroin use in this
3 Commonwealth; and creating an advisory committee.

4 WHEREAS, The United States makes up 4.5% of the world's
5 population; and

6 WHEREAS, The United States consumes 80% of the opiate
7 prescription drugs; and

8 WHEREAS, The human suffering associated with addiction for
9 affected families has now reached epidemic proportions; and

10 WHEREAS, Criminal court dockets are crowded with people who
11 are living with an addiction to prescription drugs; and

12 WHEREAS, The death toll is surging from opiate prescription
13 drug overdoses; and

14 WHEREAS, Those who become addicted to prescription drugs,
15 left untreated, tend to shift to abusing heroin, and this has
16 resulted in a huge increase in heroin use across this
17 Commonwealth; and

1 WHEREAS, The proliferation of opiate prescription drug abuse
2 has become a crisis; therefore be it

3 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
4 State Government Commission to establish a task force on opiate
5 prescription drug proliferation; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the task force consist of four members
7 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, two
8 appointed in consultation with the Majority Leader and two
9 appointed in consultation with the Minority Leader; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission create
12 an advisory committee, including, but not limited to, the
13 following individuals:

14 (1) A representative recommended by the Department of
15 Drug and Alcohol Programs.

16 (2) A representative recommended by the Department of
17 Public Welfare.

18 (3) A representative recommended by the Insurance
19 Department.

20 (4) A physician recommended by the Department of Health.

21 (5) A representative recommended by the State Board of
22 Pharmacy.

23 (6) A representative recommended by the Attorney
24 General.

25 (7) A representative recommended by the Pennsylvania
26 Fraternal Order of Police.

27 (8) A representative recommended by the Pennsylvania
28 Athletic Oversight Committee.

29 (9) Two physicians recommended by the Pennsylvania
30 Medical Society, one of whom holds membership in the American

1 Society of Addiction Medicine and the other who is a
2 physician with expertise in chronic pain management and
3 treatment.

4 (10) A physician who is a member of the Pennsylvania
5 Psychiatric Society specializing in addiction psychiatry.

6 (11) A representative recommended by the Drug and
7 Alcohol Service Providers Organization of Pennsylvania.

8 (12) A representative recommended by the Pennsylvania
9 Recovery Organizations Alliance.

10 (13) A representative recommended by a manufacturer of
11 opioid drugs.

12 (14) A representative recommended by the Pennsylvania
13 District Attorneys Association.

14 (15) A representative recommended by the Pennsylvania
15 Coroners Association.

16 (16) A representative of chronic pain patients
17 recommended by a physician with expertise in chronic pain
18 management.

19 (17) A representative of pharmacists recommended by the
20 Pennsylvania Association of Chain Drug Stores.

21 (18) A representative of pharmacies recommended by the
22 Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association.

23 (19) A representative recommended by the Pennsylvania
24 State Nurses Association;

25 and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the advisory committee examine existing laws
27 relative to the prescribing and dispensing of prescription
28 opiate drugs; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the advisory committee gather facts from
30 existing public hearings that have been held by legislative

1 committees; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the task force and advisory committee make a
3 report to the General Assembly with suggested changes to current
4 State laws and regulations that will provide for safer and more
5 effective pain management practices, ensure that pain management
6 practitioners are sufficiently trained in identifying addiction
7 and referring addicted patients to appropriate care and help
8 combat the proliferation of misuse and abuse of opiate
9 prescription drugs within one year of the adoption of this
10 resolution.