



## Legislation Text

File #: 19-0161R, Version: 0

\* **Warning:** This is an unofficial, introductory copy of the bill.  
The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

### Introductory\*

### City of Baltimore Council Bill                    R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Burnett

### A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning

### **International Overdose Awareness Day**

For the purpose of recognizing August 31, 2019 as International Overdose Awareness Day.

### Recitals

August 31, 2019 is International Overdose Awareness Day. This is a day that is recognized in communities around the world as a day that aims to publicly challenge the stigma associated with substance use disorder, to raise awareness of overdose, and to remember those who have died or suffered permanent injury due to drug overdose. International Overdose Awareness Day is also intended to send a message of support and hope to families and friends of those suffering from substance use disorder, as well as current, and former substance users.

Here in Baltimore, the disease of addiction impacts social determinants of health that may decrease life expectancy and quality of life for our residents. More than 25,000 Baltimore City residents suffer from substance use disorder. In 2018 alone, 888 Baltimoreans died due to overdosing. In that same year, Baltimore City had the highest age-adjusted overdose mortality rate among large metropolitan counties in the U.S. Since 2007, Baltimore City has lost 4,565 lives to opioid overdose. To that end, the Health Commissioner of Baltimore City has declared opioid overdose a public health emergency.

Racial and socioeconomic disparities have negatively impacted Baltimore City residents, creating barriers for communities to access treatment and increasing the criminalization of substance use and addiction. Baltimore's approach to combat opioid addiction and overdose is built on a three-pillar strategy that includes saving the lives with Naloxone, the lifesaving medication that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose; increasing access to quality and effective on-demand treatment and providing long-term recovery support; and increasing education and awareness in order to reduce stigma through a trauma-informed lens.

In 2015, Baltimore City became the first jurisdiction in Maryland to expand access to Naloxone using a standing order when the Health Commissioner issued a standing order to prescribe Naloxone to all of the City's 620,000 residents. Further, in 2017, the Commissioner issued a new standing order that allows residents to purchase Naloxone without the previously required training certificate, making the medication effectively available over-the-counter.

Everyday residents in Baltimore City - our friends and neighbors - have performed 4,550 Naloxone

administrations to save lives. Baltimore has demonstrated that Naloxone in more hands can save lives, and the federal government should negotiate directly with manufacturers to reduce the price of Naloxone so that more local communities can purchase it for their first responders to save lives.

**Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore,** That the City Council recognizes August 31, 2019 as International Overdose Awareness Day.

**And be it further resolved,** Baltimore City supports the goals and ideals of International Overdose Awareness Day and urges all citizens to join in this day to honor the somber reality of communities plagued with overdose deaths with support on this day and every day; encourages all citizens, partner organizations, and community members to visit [www.dontdie.org](http://www.dontdie.org); and honors the commitment and dedication of health care professionals, partner organizations, and community members for working in Baltimore City to prevent deaths from overdose and save lives of people suffering from addiction.

**And be it further resolved,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Baltimore City Health Commissioner, the Mayor's Legislative Liason to the City Council, and the Mayor.