

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 140619)

RESOLUTION

Authorizing Council's Committee on Public Safety to hold public hearings examining the need for a strategic plan for prescription drug drop boxes throughout the City of Philadelphia to take back expired, unused or unwanted prescriptions and the effect these boxes will have in the battle against prescription drug misuse, abuse, addiction and overdose.

WHEREAS, Prescription drug misuse, abuse, addiction and overdose is becoming an epidemic in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdose death rates in the United States have more than tripled since 1990, in large part due to increased prescription drug abuse; and

WHEREAS, Nearly 15,000 people die every year of overdoses involving prescription painkillers. The number of overdose deaths from prescription drugs is now greater than those of deaths from heroin and cocaine combined; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, 1 in 20 people in the U.S. (age 12 or older) reported using highly addictive prescription painkillers for non-medical reasons in the past year; and

WHEREAS, Among those who reported past-year non-medical use of a prescription drug, nearly 14 percent met criteria for abuse of or addiction; and

WHEREAS, Abuse of prescription drugs is highest among young adults aged 18 to 25; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that the abuse of opioid analgesics results in over \$72 billion in medical costs alone each year; and

WHEREAS, According to a 2011 survey in Pennsylvania, 14 percent of youth surveyed admitted to taking prescription drugs that were not prescribed to them and 18 percent felt that prescription drugs were not harmful; and

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WHEREAS, Almost all prescription drugs involved in overdoses come from prescriptions originally. More than three out of four people who misuse prescription painkillers use drugs prescribed to someone else; and

WHEREAS, America's 12 to 17 year olds have made prescription drugs the number one substance of abuse for their age group, and much of that supply is unwittingly coming from the medicine cabinets of their parents, grandparents, and friends. More and more adults recognize the need to remove these substances from the home and legally and safely turn them over to law enforcement for proper chain of custody and court ordered destruction; and

WHEREAS, There are also environmental dangers in the improper disposal of prescription drugs by impacting groundwater and rivers and harming wildlife; and

WHEREAS, Law enforcement is the only entity legally able to accept these medications and process them properly so that they do not fall into the wrong hands. Law enforcement takes control of and destroys drugs on a regular basis as part of their regular operations; and

WHEREAS, The National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators (NADDI) has launched a program designed to significantly reduce the prescription drugs in American homes that are either no longer needed or outdated by installing prescription drug boxes in cities throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, Secure and permanent prescription drug drop boxes have been a successfully proven way to collect expired, unused and unwanted medications; and

WHEREAS, Cities throughout the country have seen great success in the implementation of prescription drop boxes. For instance, it has been nearly 6 months since the Floyd County Sheriff's Office in Georgia installed a drug drop box for unwanted and unneeded prescription medications. In that time, officials have collected 246 pounds of prescription medications that could have potentially ended up in landfills, the municipal water supply or worse, being abused. Furthermore, in Ohio, the Fairfield Police Department has collected 137.68 pounds of medication from January 1, 2012 through March 31, 2012.

After Halloween of last year, when the box was installed, the police department collected an additional 46.24 pounds in November and December. That is nearly 200 pounds in five months; and

WHEREAS, The City needs to invest in a proven successful way to battle against prescription drug misuse, abuse, addiction and overdose and prescription drop boxes could be the solution; and

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RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the Committee on Public Safety is hereby authorized to hold public hearings regarding the strategic placement of prescription drug drop boxes throughout the City and their effect on battling the prescription drug abuse epidemic.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That in furtherance of such investigation, the Committee is hereby authorized to issue subpoenas as may be necessary or appropriate to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents to the full extent authorized under Section 2-401 of The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the nineteenth day of June, 2014.

Darrell L. Clarke
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Michael A. Decker
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember O'Brien

Sponsored by: Councilmembers O'Brien, Jones, Goode, Oh, Tasco, Kenney, Johnson, Blackwell, Quiñones Sánchez, Greenlee, Bass, Squilla, Henon, Reynolds Brown and O'Neill