

Legislation Text

File #: 160655, **Version:** 0

Authorizing the Public Health and Human Services Committee to hold hearings on obtaining life-saving Naloxone at minimal cost and distributing it most effectively.

WHEREAS, Naloxone, commonly referred to as Narcan, is a non-addictive drug used to temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid or heroin overdose by blocking the effects of opioids on the brain and restoring breathing within two to eight minutes. It is known as an opioid antagonist. Naloxone can be administered through injection or nasal spray; and

WHEREAS, Naloxone has been used to save hundreds of lives. More than 300 municipal police departments, the Pennsylvania State Police, and hundreds of individual officers reversed more than 600 opioid overdoses in the past year. Philadelphia police officers have saved 129 lives by using naloxone kits which have been distributed to police; and

WHEREAS, Governor Wolf signed Act 139, or "David's Law", into effect. The law makes naloxone available to law enforcement, first responders, and anyone else who may be in a position to assist an individual at risk of experiencing an opioid-related overdose. Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine signed a statewide standing order for naloxone, providing a prescription for all Pennsylvanians; and

WHEREAS, Heroin and opioid overdose deaths continue to rise in Philadelphia. In 2015, 693 people died of a drug overdose in Philadelphia County. The majority of these deaths were traced to heroin and opioid abuse; and

WHEREAS, Naloxone can be expensive to obtain. A single dose purchased at wholesale can cost approximately \$40. This can cause barriers for distributing naloxone to those who will be most likely to use it to save the lives of friends and family; and

WHEREAS, One of the greatest needs in addressing the heroin and opioid epidemic is to distribute naloxone more effectively. Naloxone can extend the lives of those who are in danger of overdosing from heroin and opioids, and it can extend hope for those who are abusing these drugs to seek treatment and fully recover; and

WHEREAS, Coordination is needed to determine how to gather and spend resources to obtain and distribute naloxone to those who can use it effectively to save lives and prevent the death toll from the heroin and opioid epidemic to rise; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby authorizes the Public Health and Human Services Committee to hold hearings on obtaining life-saving naloxone at minimal cost and distributing it most effectively.