

The Connecticut General Assembly



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HOUSE PASSES BILL TO COMBAT OPIOID CRISIS

State Representative Theresa Conroy (D-Seymour, Beacon Falls, Derby), Rep. Linda M. Gentile (D-Ansonia, Derby) and Sen. Joseph J. Crisco, Jr. (D-Woodbridge) praised passage of legislation that will impact the state's opioid crisis. The House of Representatives today approved HB 5053, An Act Increasing Access To Overdose Reversal Drugs.

The legislation will improve access to Naloxone, often known as Narcan, a medication that is used to treat opioid overdose; cap first-time painkiller prescriptions to a 7-day supply; strengthen the prescription monitoring program; and release health care professionals and good Samaritans from liability when they administer an opioid antagonist, such as Narcan, to treat an overdose.

“Heroin and prescription drug overdoses are claiming more lives in Connecticut every year,” **Rep. Conroy**, an APRN, said. “Expanding access to Narcan is an important step in this public health crisis. Allowing more first responders to carry Narcan will save lives.”

The 7-day cap on painkillers applies to first-time adult prescriptions and all prescriptions for minors, with exceptions for certain medical conditions.

“There are very few families who have not been touched in some way by the devastating impact of an opioid overdose,” **Rep. Gentile** said. “It is a public health epidemic that affects every socio-economic class, every ethnic background and every age.”

The bill requires that local emergency medical services are equipped with and trained in the use of Narcan. It also allows doctors to write prescriptions for the overdose reversal drug without first getting permission from a patient's health insurer.

“The world has awoken to the public health emergency that is prescription opioid addiction and the havoc it is wreaking on our friends and families,” **Sen. Crisco** said today. “This bill contains multiple provisions to help alleviate some of the pain and suffering caused by these addictions.”

Public Health Committee House Chair, **Rep. Matt Ritter** (D-Hartford) said, “This bipartisan legislation acts on two fronts by making it easier for those currently struggling with opioid addiction to access Narcan and preventing new cases of addiction by capping first-time pain killer prescriptions. We have a responsibility to all those who have lost a loved one to this deadly addiction to address Connecticut's opioid epidemic, and today we took an important step forward.”

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