

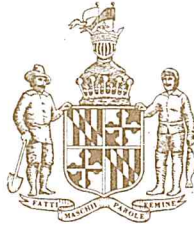
**SENATOR JACKSON SB936 WRITTEN TESTIMONY.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jackson, Michael

Position: FAV

MICHAEL A. JACKSON  
*Legislative District 27*  
Calvert, Charles and  
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Judicial Proceedings Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 936**

**GENERAL PROVISIONS – COMMEMORATIVE DAYS –  
OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY**

**EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
COMMITTEE**

**MARCH 16, 2021**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 936 is a very straightforward bill that simply requires the Governor to annually proclaim August 31<sup>st</sup> as Overdose Awareness Day and to correspondingly lower State flags to half-staff.

Each year Maryland loses thousands of residents to drug overdoses and drug-related death. The purpose of this legislation is to clearly enshrine August 31<sup>st</sup> as a date to recognize those deaths and this epidemic and to encourage those currently suffering to seek support and treatment.

As someone who spent the majority of his professional career in law enforcement, I have seen firsthand the impact that drug addiction can have on individuals and to their loved ones. Reducing the stigma attached to seeking treatment for addiction would save countless lives. I am hopeful that declaring August 31<sup>st</sup> as Overdose Awareness Day would be a means to reduce said stigma and to quell the suffering of those who are addicted and those who love them.

**For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 936.**

**SB936 Testimony 022121.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mahoney, Pat

Position: FAV



To: Members, Rules Committee

From: Chesapeake Beach Mayor Patrick J Mahoney and Town Council

Subject: Testimony Supporting Senate Bill (SB) 936 General Provisions – Commemorative Days – Overdose Awareness Day

Committee Members,

On behalf of the residents and Town Council of Chesapeake Beach, Maryland, I ask for your support for Senate Bill 936 recognizing August 31<sup>st</sup> as Overdose Awareness Day in the state of Maryland and authorizing the American flag to be flown at half mast on that day in recognition of family and friends lost to the opioid crisis.

In our small town of Chesapeake Beach, there have been more than 90 overdoses and 15 deaths attributed to Opioid Use Disorder since 2016, devastating families. Since January of 2017, I, the Town Council, residents of Chesapeake Beach, and partners, through our Twin Beach Opioid Abuse Awareness Coalition, have worked diligently to raise awareness about the opioid crisis with our residents, connect those in need with prevention, recovery and support resources, reduce the shame surrounding this disorder, and help save lives. Yet more needs to be done, especially to reduce the stigma surrounding Opioid Use Disorder so the people afflicted with this disease and their family members seek and get the support they need.

This bill provides several important messages from our state leaders to our residents. They are: 1) Opioid Use Disorder is a chronic disease, not a character flaw; 2) those who have died from this disease, and those who



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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continue to struggle with it and their families are valued by us; and 3) overdose death is preventable.

For these reasons we support Bill 936 and encourage you to support it as well. Too many people are dead from this horrible crisis already.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Patrick J Mahoney

Mayor, Chesapeake Beach, MD

(410) 257-6905

# **SB 936- Commemorative Day Overdose Awareness- EHE**

Uploaded by: Polsky, Larry

Position: FAV

# CALVERT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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STATE OF MARYLAND

## SENATE BILL 936 EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

*Commemorative Days – Overdose Awareness Day*  
**Laurence Polsky, MD, MPH, Health Officer, Calvert County Health Department**  
*Position: Support – March 16, 2021*

The Calvert County Health Department supports SB 936 and the effort of Sen. Jackson to bring sustained attention to the toll overdose deaths have taken on families across Maryland. This past year, 2,784 of our residents died of acute overdose. 90% of these fatalities involved opioids. Research has shown that most of these people first began using addictive substances in their teens, and the risks of overdose cut across racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines. Overdose Awareness Day is a reminder that prevention efforts should start early in all homes and schools since no one is immune from drug dependence and misuse.

It is worth considering expanding the commemoration to Addiction and Overdose Awareness Day since in addition to the several thousand Marylanders who died of acute overdose, thousands more die each year from chronic toxicity due to other addictive substances. Annually, nearly 2,000 Marylanders die prematurely due to the chronic effects of alcohol (liver disease, gastrointestinal bleeding, cancers, and neurological damage) and almost 10,000 die from tobacco-induced cancers, heart disease, stroke, and chronic lung disease. In addition, the impacts on families from all types of substance misuse take tragic tolls for years prior to overdose events or deaths from chronic disease.

Regardless of the will of the General Assembly to recognize Overdose Awareness Day or Addiction and Overdose Awareness Day, this annual commemoration will serve as an important reminder to all Marylanders that we must actively work to keep ourselves and our children safe from the misuse of addictive substances.

**NCADD-MD - SB 936 FAV - Overdose Awareness Day.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rosen-Cohen, Nancy

Position: FAV





**Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee  
March 16, 2021**

**Senate Bill 936  
General Provisions – Commemorative Days – Overdose Awareness Day**

**Support**

NCADD-Maryland is in support of *Senate Bill 936 - General Provisions – Commemorative Days – Overdose Awareness Day*.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the pre-existing opioid overdose death fatality crisis has worsened. In Maryland, third quarter data from the Maryland Department of Health shows a 14% increase in the number of opioid overdose deaths in 2020, over the same period the year before. The numbers were up even before the impact of the pandemic early last year.

A commemorative day is not going to fix this crisis. It will, however, support individuals in celebrating their recovery journeys, allow families to acknowledge their losses, and provide communities greater opportunity to discuss needed strategies to help people with substance use disorders.

We urge a favorable report.

*The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.*