

Chase B. Mattingly for the FIGHT, Inc.
3800 27th Street
Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732



SENATE BILL 100
EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Commemorative Days - Overdose Awareness Day
Sandra E. Mattingly, Constituent - Chase B. Mattingly for the FIGHT, Inc.
Position - Favorable with Amendments - March 10, 2022

My name is Sandy Mattingly and I represent the thousands of Maryland families and individuals who have been impacted by addiction and overdose. Whether they struggle with an addiction, live with a love one struggling, or have lost a loved one to a drug induced death. Their lives matter.

My son, Chase Mattingly was only 21 years old four years ago and he made a horrible mistake, a mislead choice to use a drug that caused his death. He was not in addiction. He was healthy, happy and had a bright future. He died from Fentanyl Intoxication. He didn't intend to die and at that time I, the parent, had no idea what Fentanyl was. His life mattered too.

International Overdose Awareness Day is a global event held on August 31st each year and aims to raise awareness of drug overdose, reduce the stigma of substance use and acknowledge the grief of families and friends who have lost love ones.

The tragedy of addiction, overdose and overdose death is unacceptable. Overdose does not discriminate and is preventable. The stigma, the shame and the denial of this epidemic continues to reach epic proportions as we see many more of our young people dying unintentionally do to substance misuse and addiction. This is a mental health crisis. We must act!

To help reduce this stigma I ask each and every one of you to think about the value of your life and that of your loved ones. We need to step up and require our Governor to enact legislation to annually recognize our overdose crisis and lower all flags in memory of our fallen. Lowering our flags on this day would send a much needed public statement and certainly a strong message to our citizens that everyone affected by this crisis is valued.

Our Governor has the authority under EO 01.01.1990.30 Protocol for the Maryland State Flag, Section 5.03 - Use During Period of Mourning, to lower our state flag. A State Governor also has the authority to order our national flag to fly half-staff in honor of any national day of remembrance if they so choose. Let's join the state of Virginia who passed HJR562 last year and will annually fly all flags on August 31st to show their citizens they are remembered and valued.

I urge you to vote YES to Maryland SB0100 to annually Commemorate Overdose Awareness Day and Fly our Flags Half-Staff. Reduce the stigma and help save lives. The Governor's office continues to state and I quote "We are committed to using every tool at our disposal to support individuals battling addiction, their families, and communities for a brighter future." What better way to make good on this commitment and show our citizens that their lives really do matter.

Together let's get Senate Bill 100 on the Governor's desk. Don't wait till it's too late. This effort costs nothing and could help change everything. Thank you.