



STATE OF TENNESSEE
PROCLAMATION
BY THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS, overdose tragically took the lives of at least 1,818 Tennesseans in 2018 and overdose rates are increasing in some communities in the first half of 2020; and

WHEREAS, the number of lives lost to overdose would be greater if not for programs established by the state, supported by federal government agencies and carried out by partners in communities across the state by increasing public awareness, addressing stigma and reducing harm; and

WHEREAS, community-based programs from the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services including Regional Overdose Prevention Specialists have distributed at least 160,000 units of the overdose reversal medication naloxone, resulting in 16,000 documented lives saved since October 2017, Tennessee Recovery Navigators have seen more than 3,700 patients in emergency departments, some after experiencing overdose, since June 2018, and Faith Based Initiatives have 635 current Certified Recovery Congregations; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Tennessee Department of Health announced expansion of a framework for community transformation in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help fight the opioid crisis through the identification of high-risk individuals in the most highly-impacted communities in the state, engaging these individuals to build trust and provide linkage to evidenced-based substance use disorder treatment, harm reduction services and other stabilizing services; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee encourages communities to develop and support local coalitions, and localities play a major role in assisting with the removal of stigma of addiction and the normalization of recovery; and

WHEREAS, the prevention and reversal of overdose gives people living with substance use issues hope of entering treatment and emerging into recovery; and

WHEREAS, the state, its partners in community behavioral health and public health and countless Tennesseans touched by the tragedy of overdose are united, dedicated and committed to ending overdose; and

WHEREAS, International Overdose Awareness Day is an opportunity for all Tennesseans to stand beside those who have lost loved ones to an overdose and those who have a substance use disorder and are diligently working toward recovery;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bill Lee, Governor of the State of Tennessee, do hereby proclaim August 31, 2020 as

Overdose Awareness Day

in Tennessee and encourage all citizens to join me in this worthy observance.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the State of Tennessee to be affixed at Nashville on this seventeenth day of August, 2020.

Bill Lee

Governor

Jeffrey J. Bland

Secretary of State