

Heroin & Opioid Prevention & Enforcement (HOPE) Act

SB ### (Sen. Davis) / HB ### (Reps. Murphy & Horn)

*Protecting patients, neighborhoods & communities – and saving lives –
by giving law enforcement authorities the tools & resources
they need to confront the opioid epidemic*



The Opioid Crisis in North Carolina

- ✓ Drug overdoses are the leading cause of accidental deaths in NC – more than auto crashes.
- ✓ Every day, nearly four North Carolinians die from a medication or drug overdose.
- ✓ Many more are hospitalized, and even more than that are taken to the emergency room.
- ✓ The problem is worsening year by year, particularly the number of overdose deaths from heroin and its synthetic cousin, Fentanyl.



Protecting Patients

The HOPE Act protects patients who are administered or prescribed controlled substances by:

- ✓ Making it a Class G felony for a healthcare worker or first responder to **steal a patient's drugs**;
- ✓ Making it a more serious Class E felony for a healthcare worker to **dilute a patient's drugs or substitute a different drug** for the drug the patient is supposed to receive.

While the overwhelming majority of healthcare workers would never steal, dilute, or substitute a patient's drugs, some do; and our laws must be carefully tailored to address those who do.



Protecting Neighborhoods & Communities

The HOPE Act protects neighborhoods & communities by giving law enforcement the tools and resources they need to investigate and prosecute opioid and other drug crimes. The HOPE Act:

- ✓ Clarifies that our drug trafficking statute covers **trafficking in the deadly drug fentanyl**;
- ✓ Enables local law enforcement authorities to **better investigate specific cases of drug diversion** by providing access to prescription data and records, with appropriate safeguards;
- ✓ Enables Medicaid fraud investigators to **better investigate specific cases of Medicaid fraud** by providing access to prescription data and records, with appropriate safeguards;



Protecting Neighborhoods & Communities (continued)

- ✓ Invests \$10 million per year in **drug treatment**, increasing options for local law enforcement authorities and district attorneys who seek to divert low-level offenders into treatment; and
- ✓ Supports our **statewide drug take-back program**, Operation Medicine Drop / Safe Kids NC, by giving the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) \$160,000 per year to gather and incinerate the drugs that local law enforcement offices collect through hundreds of drug take-back boxes and events.



Protecting Lives of Officers & Community Members

The HOPE Act gives local law enforcement authorities greater access to the overdose reversal drug naloxone so that law enforcement officers can:

- ✓ **Save the lives** of drug overdose victims when law enforcement is first on the scene; and
- ✓ **Protect officers themselves** from dangers posed by the deadly illicit drug fentanyl.



Other Provisions

The HOPE Act also includes these provisions:

- ✓ The HOPE Act requires that, when **veterinary drugs** are dispensed by veterinarians or pharmacies, prescription data is reported to the state Controlled Substances Reporting System.
- ✓ The HOPE Act requires that prescribers and dispensers report their **National Provider Identifier (NPI)** number to CSRS when prescribing or dispensing controlled substances. This would allow CSRS to develop reports by medical specialty and to alert individual pharmacists when patients have met a predetermined threshold of receiving prescriptions for controlled substances, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.
- ✓ Under the HOPE Act, when a pharmacy is required to obtain photo identification before dispensing certain schedule II and III controlled substances (including opioids), the pharmacy must then report the **name, form of identification, and identification number** to the state Controlled Substances Reporting System.



Endorsements

- ✓ North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police
- ✓ North Carolina Sheriffs' Association
- ✓ North Carolina Department of Justice