

Dear Mayor and Council,

Dec 13th, 2021

Re: Moms Stop The Harm Resolution on Overdose Crisis

In November 2020, Moms Stop the Harm asked municipalities and Indigenous communities across the country for their assistance in ending the overdose and toxic drug crisis and the toll it is taking on our communities. Specifically, we asked you to consider passing a resolution on the overdose crisis. Among other things, the resolution asks the federal government to declare the overdose crisis to be a national public health emergency and develop a pan-Canadian plan that looks at decriminalization and legal regulation of drugs.

I am writing to you today to inquire whether the council will be considering our request to pass a resolution (updated version of resolution attached).

As you may know, about 23,000 Canadians died from largely preventable opioid-related overdoses between January 2016 and March 2021. In October of this year there were 6.5 deaths per day in BC alone.

It is our view that the federal government needs to do much more than it has to date, which is why we are requesting that your municipality consider passing a resolution calling on the federal government to: 1) do the right thing and declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency, and 2) work with provinces to develop a comprehensive pan-Canadian plan for ending the overdose and drug poisoning crisis.

As of Nov 9th, 2021, there were 65 municipalities from Daniel's Harbour, NL to Victoria, BC that had already passed all or part of the MSTH resolution. You can obtain more detailed information about these resolutions at: <https://www.momsstoptheharm.com/actions/2020/11/24/moms-stop-the-harm-takes-its-message-to-municipalities>.

Thank you for any information or assistance you can provide. I look forward to hearing from you on this very urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Lisa Weih

22 (1)

Mother of Renee Bedard (Aug 1990-Jan 2020)
Member of Moms Stop The Harm

MSTH Resolution to Municipalities on the Overdose Crisis

Whereas the opioid crisis is one of the largest public health emergencies of our lifetime, with a death on average every two hours and a death toll of 22,828 in the past five years alone (January 2016 to March 2021)

Whereas other countries have significantly reduced drug-related fatalities with reforms such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply and decriminalization for personal use.

Whereas the federal government has indicated it is premature to discuss these measures until there are comprehensive supports for people to get well.

Whereas supports are needed, but measures that save lives are essential if people are to survive and access supports.

Whereas the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has stated that they agree the evidence suggests “decriminalization for simple possession as an effective way to reduce the public health and public safety harms associated with substance use”, causing the government to indicate that it is now “deliberating” over decriminalization.

Whereas the overdose crisis rages, showing few signs of abating.

Be it resolved that the Government of Canada declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency so that it is taken seriously and funded appropriately.

Be it also resolved that the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by this crisis and meet with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive, pan-Canadian overdose action plan, which includes comprehensive supports and full consideration of reforms that other countries have used to significantly reduce drug-related fatalities and stigma, such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply of pharmaceutical alternatives to toxic street drugs, and decriminalization for personal use.

MAILING INFORMATION

Please send your resolution to Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Address Locator 0900C2, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0K9

Please send a copy of your resolution to:

1) Moms Stop the Harm at info@momsstoptheharm.com or PO Box 31062, University Heights PO, Victoria BC V8N 6J3

2) Your local member of Parliament (MP). You can get your MP's contact information by calling 1-800-463-6868 or going to <https://www.ourcommons.ca/en>