

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 600

By Dunn

A RESOLUTION to urge the United States Food and Drug Administration to make Naloxone an over-the-counter drug.

WHEREAS, the United States is in the midst of an opioid crisis that has resulted in the deaths of 64,000 Americans in 2016 and in the creation of a presidential commission on combating drug abuse; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee has also been afflicted by this opioid crisis as drug overdose deaths in this State have risen from 1,062 in 2011 to 1,631 in 2016, and opioids were present in an overwhelming majority of 72.7 percent of overdose deaths in this State in 2016; and

WHEREAS, opioids include heroin, fentanyl, and prescription analgesics, and any number of clandestinely made synthetic chemicals; and

WHEREAS, Naloxone is an essential first aid medication that can reverse the symptoms of an opioid overdose, potentially reducing harms; and

WHEREAS, Naloxone is a medication without addictive or abuse properties and therefore has no "street" value; and

WHEREAS, several states have successfully implemented first responder naloxone programs, effectively reversing opioid overdoses; and

WHEREAS, opioid overdose victims cannot save themselves and are dependent on the first aid provided by a witness, such as Good Samaritans; and

WHEREAS, Naloxone is now available in formulations that are easy for bystanders and non-medically trained personnel, including friends and family members, to administer safely without harm to themselves or to the victim; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee has made strides in making Naloxone more available to first responders, yet Naloxone's status as a prescription drug continues to limit the use of this life-saving intervention in the fight against opioid abuse in this State; and

WHEREAS, it appears that at least some formulations of Naloxone could be made safely available over the counter and increase appropriate utilization of this important tool in combating opioid abuse in Tennessee and throughout the nation; and

WHEREAS, the Food and Drug Administration has taken such steps as preparing a model label and initiating drug trials that could serve as helpful precursors to selling Naloxone over the counter; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we urge the United States Food and Drug Administration to actively consider exercising their authority under 21 CFR Part 330 to list Naloxone in the over-the-counter monographs so as to increase the use of this life-saving medication in combating opioid deaths.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared and transmitted to the commissioner of the United States Food and Drug Administration and to the members of the Tennessee congressional delegation.