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ACR-26 Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month. (2015-2016)

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 26

CHAPTER 16

Relative to Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 07, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 26, Levine. Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim the month of March 2015 as Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month and encourage all citizens to actively participate in prevention programs and activities, and to safely store and dispose of their medications on a continual basis.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, Drug overdose was the leading cause of injury and death in 2012, and among people 25 to 64 years of age, drug overdose caused more deaths than motor vehicle traffic crashes; and

WHEREAS, Every day in the United States, 120 people die as a result of drug overdose, and another 6,748 are treated in emergency departments for the misuse or abuse of drugs; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, drug overdoses in the United States caused 43,982 deaths and 22,767, or 52 percent, of those deaths were from prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, 2.5 million emergency department visits were related to the misuse or abuse of pharmaceuticals; and

WHEREAS, Nonmedical use of prescription painkillers costs health insurers up to \$72.5 billion annually in direct health care costs; and

WHEREAS, Overdose deaths involving opioid pain relievers now exceed the number of deaths from heroin and cocaine combined; and

WHEREAS, As many as 70 percent of people who abuse prescription drugs get them from a relative or friend instead of a doctor; and

WHEREAS, During the last National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) collected 617,150 pounds (309 tons) of unwanted medication on Saturday, September 27, 2014; and

WHEREAS, The 2014 National Drug Control Strategy listed four interventions to reduce prescription drug abuse, one of which was to provide safe drug disposal by increasing return and take-back programs. We support California acquiring a sustainably

funded and well publicized statewide medication take-back system that is much more convenient to consumers than the current one-day events or disposal at hazardous waste facilities; and

WHEREAS, The National Coalition Against Prescription Drug Abuse, law enforcement, community-based organizations, alcohol and other drug service providers, and civic and business leaders coordinate Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month activities in California to engage our citizens in demonstrating their commitment to prevention campaigns and education aimed at raising awareness about the abuse and misuse of prescription drugs, promoting prescription drug safe storage and disposal, and using medications only as prescribed; and

WHEREAS, Families, schools, businesses, faith-based communities, law enforcement, medical professionals, county and local governments, health care practitioners, and pharmacists in the state, and the general public will demonstrate their commitment to the prevention of prescription medication abuse by participating in activities intended to highlight local efforts during the month of March; and

WHEREAS, The Legislature supports National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day as declared by the DEA, and encourages residents to locate their local collection site and safely dispose of their accumulated unwanted and unused prescription drugs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby declares March 2015 as Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Month and encourages all citizens to actively participate in prevention programs and activities, and to safely store and dispose of their medications on a continual basis; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.