



Issue: Opioid Addiction

Opioid Addiction

A Virginia Public Health Emergency

Opioid overdose deaths exceed fatal car accidents as the leading cause of unnatural death in Virginia, killing over 1,000 Virginians a year. Up to 82 opioid prescriptions were written for every 100 residents of Virginia in 2012, and as many as 1 in 4 people who receive prescription opioids long-term for non-cancer pain struggles with addiction.

Republican Position:

The Republican majority in the House has consistently prevented the expansion of Medicaid, denying 400,000 eligible Virginians access to substance abuse services.

The majority of House Republicans (59%) voted against or abstained support for HB2317, a key harm-reduction program to combat the spread of needle-related diseases including HIV and hepatitis, and to connect people to addiction treatment information.

Democratic Position:

On November 21st, 2016, Governor McAuliffe declared the opioid addiction crisis a public health emergency in Virginia.

House Democrats have consistently voted in favor of numerous opioid epidemic legislation efforts: HB 1453/HB1449, HB 2165, HB 2317, and HB 1786.