

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 263

Designating October 2009 as “National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Designating October 2009 as “National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month”.

Whereas over-the-counter and prescription medicines are extremely safe, effective, and potentially lifesaving when used properly;

Whereas the abuse and recreational use of over-the-counter and prescription medicines can be extremely dangerous and produce serious side effects;

Whereas during a recently sampled month, approximately 7,000,000 individuals 12 years of age and older reported using prescription psychotherapeutic medicines for non-medical purposes;

Whereas prescription medications such as pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, and sedatives are second only to marijuana as the most abused drug in the United States;

Whereas recent studies indicate that 2,500,000 children between 12 and 17 years of age, or 1 out of every 10 children, have intentionally abused cough medicine to get high from the ingredient dextromethorphan;

Whereas 4,700,000 young adults, or 1 out of every 5 young men and women, have used prescription medicines for non-medical purposes;

Whereas in 2008, the National Institute on Drug Abuse estimated that the rates for intentional abuse of cough medicine among eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders stood at 3.6 percent, 5.3 percent, and 5.5 percent, respectively;

Whereas according to research from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, more than one-third of teenagers mistakenly believe that taking prescription drugs, even if not prescribed by a doctor, is much safer than using street drugs;

Whereas the lack of understanding by teenagers and parents of the potential harms of these powerful medicines makes it more critical than ever to raise public awareness about the dangers of their abuse;

Whereas when prescription drugs are abused, they are most often obtained through friends and relatives, but can also be obtained through rogue Internet pharmacies;

Whereas parents should be aware that the Internet gives teenagers access to websites that promote abuse of medicines;

Whereas National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month promotes the message that over-the-counter and prescription medicines should be taken only as labeled or prescribed, and that taking over-the-counter and prescription medi-

cines for recreational use or in large doses can have serious and life-threatening consequences;

Whereas National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month will encourage parents to educate themselves about this problem and talk to their children about all types of substance abuse;

Whereas observance of National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month should be encouraged at the national, State, and local levels to increase awareness of the rising abuse of medicines;

Whereas educational toolkits and training methods have been developed on how to best engage and educate parents and grandparents, teachers, law enforcement officials, doctors and health care professionals, and retailers about the potential harms of cough medicine abuse; and

Whereas educating the public on the dangers of medicine abuse and promoting prevention is a critical component of what must be a multi-pronged effort to curb the disturbing rise in medicine abuse: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates October 2009 as “National Medicine Abuse Awareness Month”; and

3 (2) urges communities to carry out appropriate
4 programs and activities to educate parents and
5 youth of the potential dangers associated with medicine abuse.
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