

## MEMORANDUM

**From:** Representative MaryLouise Isaacson

**To:** All House Members

**Subject:** Prescription Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Awareness Week

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Today, another 13 Pennsylvanians will lose their battle with an opioid or heroin addiction. Preliminary data for 2019 offers a slim glimmer of promise that our efforts as a Commonwealth have been able to slow the momentum of the devastation that has hurdled across our great state and left no corner untouched.

In 2017, Pennsylvania ranked first in the nation for overdose deaths, losing 5,388 mothers, fathers, children and siblings. In that same year, Philadelphia County was home to 1 out of every 5 opioid deaths in the state. I have watched this disease transform neighborhoods, tear families apart, and take the lives of those who couldn't withstand the battle any longer. This public health crisis does not discriminate against wealth, one's social status, or even the level of education one has achieved.

Though our state has shown early signs of healing from this traumatic wave of loss and heartache, complacency has no role in this effort. We must remain vigilant in raising awareness of opioid and heroin addiction and the damages we have suffered so that we may understand how to best support and restore our communities. As such, I will be introducing a resolution designating September 16-22, 2019, as "Prescription Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

Please join me in supporting this resolution in order to re-focus our attention on the issue and on the work left to be done to fulfill the needs of Pennsylvania.