

**2014 Resolution No: 2**

**Submitted by:** Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Boston, Massachusetts

**Saving Lives through Overdose Prevention**

WHEREAS, drug overdose is the leading cause of injury death in the United States, ahead of both motor vehicle crashes and firearms; and

WHEREAS, one hundred Americans die every day from overdoses; overdose deaths are more commonly due to prescription painkillers than any other drug category; and

WHEREAS, during the 2006-2010 period, overdose deaths involving heroin increased 45 percent and deaths involving opioid analgesics increased 21percent; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has classified prescription drug abuse as an epidemic; and

WHEREAS, heroin and prescription drug abuse affect every community in the country; and

WHEREAS, death from opioid overdose is preventable through the use of naloxone, a medication that reverses the respiratory depression that causes death from overdose; and

WHEREAS, naloxone can be a tool to guide people into recovery by helping people seek treatment; and

WHEREAS, naloxone is effective, affordable and safe, does not have serious side effects other than those associated with opioid withdrawal, works within minutes, is not addictive, cannot be abused, and has no psycho-pharmacological effects; and

WHEREAS, naloxone is currently administered by paramedics and emergency room personnel to treat opioid overdose, but could prevent far more deaths through widespread distribution to law enforcement and other first responders; and

WHEREAS, police departments across the country in communities large and small now provide officers with naloxone; and

WHEREAS, the Food and Drug Administration approved a hand-held naloxone auto-injector specifically designed to simplify administration; and

WHEREAS, establishing emergency “Good Samaritan” laws to protect people who call 911 from prosecution would increase timely medical attention to overdose victims; and

WHEREAS, eighteen states and the District of Columbia have enacted “Good Samaritan” laws; and

WHEREAS, the National Drug Control Strategy acknowledges that drug problems are most effectively handled at the community level and the strategy emphasizes the importance of local, community based efforts,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors encourages cities to equip all first responders with naloxone and expand awareness and education efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors supports the continued establishment of emergency “Good Samaritan” policies to encourage individuals to call 911 in the case of an overdose, without fear of prosecution.