

Governor Cooper Signs the Opioid Response Act and Other Bills Into Law

By Administrator

Friday, 19 July 2019 08:49 - Last Updated Tuesday, 23 July 2019 09:28

Governor Roy Cooper signed the House Bill 325, the Opioid Epidemic Response Act, to help increase access to medication assisted treatment and expand harm reduction measures to reduce opioid overdose deaths across the state. Gov Cooper was joined by lawmakers from both parties and families affected by the substance abuse crisis. The bill garnered widespread support from the General Assembly led by Senator Jim Davis and Senator Gladys A. Robinson. The

Opioid Epidemic Response Act will:

1. Increase access to office-based opioid treatment (OBOT) for opioid use disorder: Remove duplicative state registration of buprenorphine prescribers that NC doctors widely cite as a barrier to prescribing medication-assisted treatment in the office-based setting.
2. Save lives by allowing people to test drugs for dangerous contaminants like fentanyl before they use them: Decriminalize the use of paraphernalia designed to test the strength or purity of drugs, such as fentanyl test strips.
3. Improve the ability of syringe exchange programs to prevent the costly spread of disease: Remove the ban on using state funds to purchase supplies for syringe exchange programs.

“This new law takes important steps to reduce harm and help doctors treat substance abuse disorder patients, and I appreciate the bipartisan effort to get this bill passed,” said Governor Cooper. “We know that improving access to care is a proven strategy to prevent more opioid deaths, and we need to expand Medicaid to help get more people health care coverage.”

From 1999-2017, more than 13,000 North Carolinians lost their lives to unintentional opioid overdose. Turning the tide of the opioid crisis is one of Governor Roy Cooper’s primary goals. Since the launch of the Opioid Action Plan in 2017, opioid dispensing has decrease by 24% and North Carolina has seen the first major decline in emergency department visits.

In North Carolina half of all people who received emergency hospital care last year with an opioid overdose were uninsured. Medicaid covers a wide range of treatments for individuals with opioid use disorder, including inpatient/outpatient treatment, rehabilitation and medication assisted treatment. Individuals with opioid use disorder who have access to affordable health care through Medicaid are twice as likely as the uninsured to receive treatment.

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“Expanding Medicaid is a proven strategy to turn the tide on the opioid crisis,” said DHHS Secretary Mandy Cohen. “It is a critical tool that we need to add to our arsenal to respond to this crisis.”

Cooper also signed the following bills into law:
Changes
On-Site Wastewater Laws

* House Bill 107: PED Oversight/ EPP
* House Bill 268: Amend

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House Bill 362: 15-Point Scale for School Performance Grades

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House Bill 546: Prohibit Counterfeit/Nonfunctional Airbags

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House Bill 620: Street Database/Manual/Public Record Except.

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House Bill 337: Change Salvage Vehicle Transfer Requirements

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Senate Bill 606: Prioritize Native NC Plants on Highway ROW

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Senate Bill 462: Modifications to NC Appraisal Board

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Senate Bill 508: Civil Procedure/Deponent Declaration

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House Bill 198: Human Trafficking Commission Recommendations

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House Bill 243: State Human Resources Act Amendments

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House Bill 323: Assess Costs of Local LEO Crime Lab Analysis

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Senate Bill 29: Move Over Law/Increase Penalties/Amber Lights

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Governor Cooper shared the following comment on HB 198: “This bill will help crack down on human trafficking and protect the victims of this horrible crime, and I appreciate both parties coming together make these important updates to our law.”

Governor Cooper shared the following comment on SB 29: “Law enforcement officers like Jason Quick put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. This bill will increase penalties for those who recklessly endanger the lives of our first responders, and I’m proud to sign it in memory of Officer Quick and in honor of all of our first responders.”