



## Legislation Text

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To declare opioid drug overdose deaths as a public health crisis in the city of Richmond and to support the implementation of a drug overdose death spike alert program by the City and other public safety agencies serving the Richmond area.

WHEREAS, according to the document entitled “Fatal Drug Overdose Quarterly Report, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2021,” (the “Report”) prepared by the Virginia Department of Health, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and dated January, 2022, drug overdose deaths have increased across the Commonwealth of Virginia, including the Richmond region, over the last decade, driven primarily by the use of opioids such as fentanyl, heroin, and prescription opioid medications; and

WHEREAS, according to the Report, 215 people died of drug overdoses in 2020 in the city of Richmond, with 203 of those deaths being the result of opioid drug overdoses; and

WHEREAS, according to the Report, in 2020, the city of Richmond had the highest rate of opioid drug overdose deaths among Virginia localities with greater than 100,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of the Mayor and the Council, programs for drug overdose death spike alerts are being implemented across the United States to inform and prepare members of communities to prevent and respond to drug overdose emergencies; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief of the Mayor and the Council, a proposed regional drug overdose spike alert program, to be known as the “Richmond Metropolitan Spike Alert program,” would be an initiative shared by public safety agencies, including those of the City, the County of Henrico, the County of Chesterfield, and the Richmond and Henrico Health District, to alert the public when a spike in drug overdoses occurs in any of the member jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the Richmond Metropolitan Spike Alert program would provide information on how to respond to a drug overdose emergency using naloxone, a medication that counteracts the effects of a drug overdose, and where

naloxone can be obtained without a prescription and at no cost through local health departments, community service boards, and harm reduction sites in the Richmond area; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council believe that it is in the best interests of the residents of the city of Richmond that the Mayor and the Council declare that opioid drug overdose deaths are a public health crisis in the city of Richmond; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and the Council believe that it is in the best interests of the residents of the city of Richmond that the Mayor and the Council support the implementation of a drug overdose death spike alert program by the City and other public safety agencies serving the Richmond area;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the Council hereby joins the Mayor in declaring that opioid drug overdose deaths are a public health crisis in the city of Richmond.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the Council joins the Mayor in supporting the implementation of a drug overdose death spike alert program by the City in collaboration with other public safety agencies serving the Richmond area.