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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 209 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY KANE, TARTAGLIONE, FONTANA, CAPPELLETTI, BROWN,  
MARTIN, HAYWOOD, DILLON, HUGHES, BREWSTER, SANTARSIERO AND  
CULVER, NOVEMBER 15, 2023

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REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, NOVEMBER 15, 2023

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating the month of November 2023 as "Good Samaritan Law  
2 Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, On August 31, 2023, "Overdose Awareness Day" was  
4 observed on the front steps of the Pennsylvania State Capitol;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The Department of Health reported 5,146 drug  
7 overdose deaths in this Commonwealth last year, a 4% decrease  
8 from 2021; and

9 WHEREAS, A portion of these tragic deaths could be prevented  
10 by utilizing Act 139 of 2014, which provides immunity to  
11 individuals reporting an incident of drug overdose; and

12 WHEREAS, The provisions of this act were passed with  
13 bipartisan and unanimous support by the General Assembly; and

14 WHEREAS, This act ensures that Pennsylvanians facing medical  
15 emergencies are able to receive necessary medical attention; and

16 WHEREAS, In March 2021, the Government Accountability Office  
17 (GAO) released a review of Good Samaritan laws throughout the

1 country; and

2 WHEREAS, The study found that 47 states and the District of  
3 Columbia have enacted Good Samaritan laws; and

4 WHEREAS, The GAO reviewed 17 studies that provided insights  
5 into the effectiveness of Good Samaritan laws; and

6 WHEREAS, The GAO found a pattern of lower rates of opioid-  
7 related overdose deaths among states that have enacted Good  
8 Samaritan laws, both compared to death rates prior to a law's  
9 enactment and death rates in states without such laws; and

10 WHEREAS, When comparing death rates prior to enactment of a  
11 Good Samaritan law and death rates in states without these laws,  
12 the GAO found a pattern of lower rates of opioid-related  
13 overdose deaths among states that have enacted Good Samaritan  
14 laws; and

15 WHEREAS, The GAO review found an increased likelihood of  
16 individuals calling 911 if they are aware of these laws; and

17 WHEREAS, The GAO analysis found that public awareness of Good  
18 Samaritan laws varies substantially across jurisdictions among  
19 law enforcement officers and the public, which could affect an  
20 individual's willingness to call for emergency assistance; and

21 WHEREAS, Act 139 of 2014 only works if everyone knows about  
22 its existence; and

23 WHEREAS, If individuals know that they will not face charges  
24 after reporting a drug overdose, they are more likely to seek  
25 the urgent attention that is necessary in emergency situations;  
26 and

27 WHEREAS, In many drug overdose cases, even a few minutes can  
28 save a life; and

29 WHEREAS, Promoting the provisions of Act 139 of 2014 and  
30 raising awareness among residents of this Commonwealth can help

1 save lives and reduce drug overdose deaths; therefore be it  
2 RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of November  
3 2023 as "Good Samaritan Law Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania;  
4 and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That all executive, legislative and judicial  
6 branches of State and local government be encouraged to raise  
7 awareness and promote the benefits of the Good Samaritan laws in  
8 this Commonwealth.