

SENATE No. 1312

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Marc R. Pacheco

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolve:

Resolve designating August 31st Overdose Awareness Day in the Commonwealth.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Marc R. Pacheco	First Plymouth and Bristol	
Joanne M. Comerford	Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester	3/9/2021
Steven Ultrino	33rd Middlesex	3/12/2021
Thomas M. Stanley	9th Middlesex	3/18/2021
Brendan P. Crighton	Third Essex	3/24/2021
John C. Velis	Second Hampden and Hampshire	3/26/2021
Jack Patrick Lewis	7th Middlesex	3/26/2021
Bradley H. Jones, Jr.	20th Middlesex	3/29/2021
Michael D. Brady	Second Plymouth and Bristol	4/2/2021
Patrick M. O'Connor	Plymouth and Norfolk	4/8/2021
James B. Eldridge	Middlesex and Worcester	4/27/2021

SENATE No. 1312

By Mr. Pacheco, a petition (accompanied by resolve, Senate, No. 1312) of Marc R. Pacheco, Joanne M. Comerford, Steven Ultrino, Thomas M. Stanley and other members of the General Court for legislation to designate August 31st as Overdose Awareness Day in the Commonwealth. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

Resolve designating August 31st Overdose Awareness Day in the Commonwealth.

1 **Resolved**, Drug addiction is a chronic disease, characterized by compulsive or difficult to
2 control drug use despite harmful consequences; and

3 Whereas, drug addiction is seen by both the Centers for Disease Control and the World
4 Health Organization as a fast-growing epidemic that can all too easily lead to overdose and
5 death; and

6 Whereas, in 2020, approximately 81,230 individuals died from drug overdoses in the
7 United States; and

8 Whereas, furthermore, for every drug overdose that results in death, there are many more
9 nonfatal overdoses, each taking an emotional and economic toll on the individual, their family,
10 and the community at large; and

11 Whereas, Drug addiction can fuel feelings of shame, guilt, embarrassment, depression,
12 and hopelessness, causing individuals to resist seeking treatment and support; and

13 Whereas, Overdose Awareness Day is a global event held on August 31 of each year that
14 aims to raise awareness of drug overdoses, reduce the stigma of a drug-related death, and to
15 acknowledge the grief felt by families and friends remembering those who have died or had a
16 permanent injury as a result of a drug overdose; and

17 Whereas, to further the goals of Overdose Awareness Day, all flags throughout the State
18 should be flown at half-staff for the day’s duration; and

19 Whereas, recognizing Overdose Awareness Day in Massachusetts sends a strong message
20 to former or current substance users, namely, that they are valued, and that overdose death is
21 preventable; now, therefore,

22 Be it resolved by the Massachusetts State Senate:

23 1. August 31 of each year shall be designated as “Overdose Awareness Day” in
24 Massachusetts to raise awareness of overdose and reduce the stigma of a drug-related death.

25 2. The Governor is respectfully requested to order flags be flown at half-staff and to
26 issue a proclamation calling upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe
27 “Overdose Awareness Day” with appropriate activities and programs each year.