



MAYOR DARRYL WALKER
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
WHITE ROCK, BC CANADA

February 19, 2021

File No. 0220-20-04

Patty Hajdu
Minister of Health, Health Canada
Address Locator 0900C2
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0K9

Dear Minister Hajdu:

Re: Petition to Municipalities on the Overdose Crisis

At the Regular Council meeting on February 8, 2021, White Rock Council unanimously adopted the following resolution:

Whereas the opioid crisis is one of the largest public health emergencies of our lifetime, with a death on average about every two hours and a death toll of over 16,360 since 2016 (January 2016 to March 2020).

Whereas other countries have significantly reduced drug-related fatalities with reforms such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply and decriminalization for personal use.

Whereas the federal government has indicated it is premature to discuss these measures until there are comprehensive supports for people to get well.

Whereas supports are needed, but measures that save lives are essential if people are to survive and access supports.

Whereas the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has stated that they agree the evidence suggests “decriminalization for simple possession as an effective way to reduce the public health and public safety harms associated with substance use”, causing the government to indicate that it is now “deliberating” over decriminalization.

Whereas the overdose crisis rages, showing few signs of abating.

Be it resolved that the Government of Canada declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency so that it is taken seriously and funded appropriately.

Be it also resolved that the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by this crisis and meet with provinces, territories and First Nations to develop a comprehensive, pan-Canadian overdose action plan, which includes comprehensive supports and full consideration of reforms that other countries have used to significantly reduce drug-related fatalities and stigma, such as legal regulation of illicit drugs to ensure safe supply of pharmaceutical alternatives to toxic street drugs, and decriminalization for personal use.

If you have any question, please contact Tracey Arthur, Director of Corporate Administration, at tarthur@whiterockcity.ca or 604-541-2212.

Sincerely,



Darryl Walker, Mayor

cc: White Rock Council
MP Kerry-Lynne Findlay, South Surrey – White Rock
Moms Stop the Harm (info@momsstoptheharm.com)