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Moms Stop The Harm Takes Its Message to Municipalities

NOVEMBER 24, 2020

In November 2020, Moms Stop the Harm asked municipalities and Indigenous communities across the country for their assistance in ending the overdose crisis and the toll it is taking on our communities. Specifically, we asked them to consider passing a resolution on the overdose crisis (see text below). Among other things, the resolution asks the federal government to declare the overdose crisis to be a national public health emergency and develop a pan-Canadian plan that looks at decriminalization and legal regulation of drugs.

The MSTH municipal initiative, like our petition campaign, is aimed at increasing political pressure on the federal government to take the overdose crisis seriously. Unfortunately, it has not done so to date.

If you'd like to help with phase two of this initiative - following up with municipalities- please let us know.

And it is still not too late to collect signatures for petitions to the House of Commons. You can get more information about how to go about this on our [**Petition for Urgent Action on the Overdose Crisis**](#) page.

Municipalities that have already passed the resolution and forwarded it to the federal minister of health Patty Hajdu are: (up to date January 28th, 2021)

- **Daniel's Harbour, NFL.,**
- **Halton Hills (Town), ON.,**
- **Cobourg, ON.,**
- **Creighton, SK.,**
- **Squamish, BC.,**
- **Kamloops, BC.,**
- **Salmo, BC.,**
- **Colombier, QC.,**
- **Saint-Valerien, QC..**
- **Saint Joseph de Coleraine, QC.,**

- Saint-Emelie-De-L'Energie, QC.,
- Thessalon, QC.,
- Victoria, BC.

More detailed information is available here:

Here is a copy of our letter:

Petition to Municipalities on the Overdose Crisis

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 and territories 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.

MAILING INFORMATION

Please send your resolution to Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health, Health Canada, Address Locator 0900C2, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0K9

Please send a copy of your resolution to:

- 1) Moms Stop the Harm at info@momsstoptheharm.com or 5-6038 Willow Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, V5Z 3S6
- 2) Your local member of Parliament (MP). You can get your MP's contact information information by calling 1-800-463-6868 or going to <https://www.ourcommons.ca/en>

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Petition for Urgent Action on the Overdose Crisis

NOVEMBER 09, 2020

Time to send a message to the Federal Government

In the upcoming months, Moms Stop The Harm members and allies will intensify our work towards ending overdose deaths and injuries by urging the Government of Canada to take action and to do things differently.

Specifically, we will ask the Government of Canada to declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency and:

- Immediately collaborate with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive, pan-Canadian overdose action plan.

- **Ensure that any plan considers reforms that other countries have used, such as legal regulation of drugs to ensure safe supply, decriminalization for personal use, and changes to flawed drug policy and policing.**
- **Ensure this emergency is taken seriously with adequately funded programming and supports.**

Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the overdose crisis is one of the most devastating public health emergencies our country has faced in a century. And it is time for the federal government to do more.

MSTH has developed a new tool to help our members and supporters to increase political pressure on the federal government to do more:

A paper Petition and Sample Letter to Your Member of Parliament (MP): Petitions are a good way to show we have support. Government representatives will not be able to help but notice when our petition is read in the House of Commons day after day. MPs will be forced, in a small way, to bear witness to the overdose crisis and hopefully respond with new and improved measures. We also hope the petition will nudge MPs to take informed positions on drug policy issues in the upcoming election.

While paper petitions may seem old school, they have more strengths than parliamentary online petitions. Online petitions can only be signed for a short period of time and are presented by one MP. Paper petitions can be presented by many MPs and signed until there is an election.

How you can help:

Step one: Download and print the [Petition](#). Please get family, friends and allies to sign our petition. You'll need a minimum of 25 signatures (Note: A couple of extra signatures always helps in case someone has not properly completed the petition).

Step two: Send the signed MSTH petition(s), along with a [Covering Letter](#), to your MP, or another MP if you prefer. Copy, paste and customize the letter. You can get your MP's contact information by calling 1-800-463-6868 or going to <https://www.ourcommons.ca/en>. Remember a) mail to MPs is postage free and b) MPs are there to help you with matters like this. It's their job.

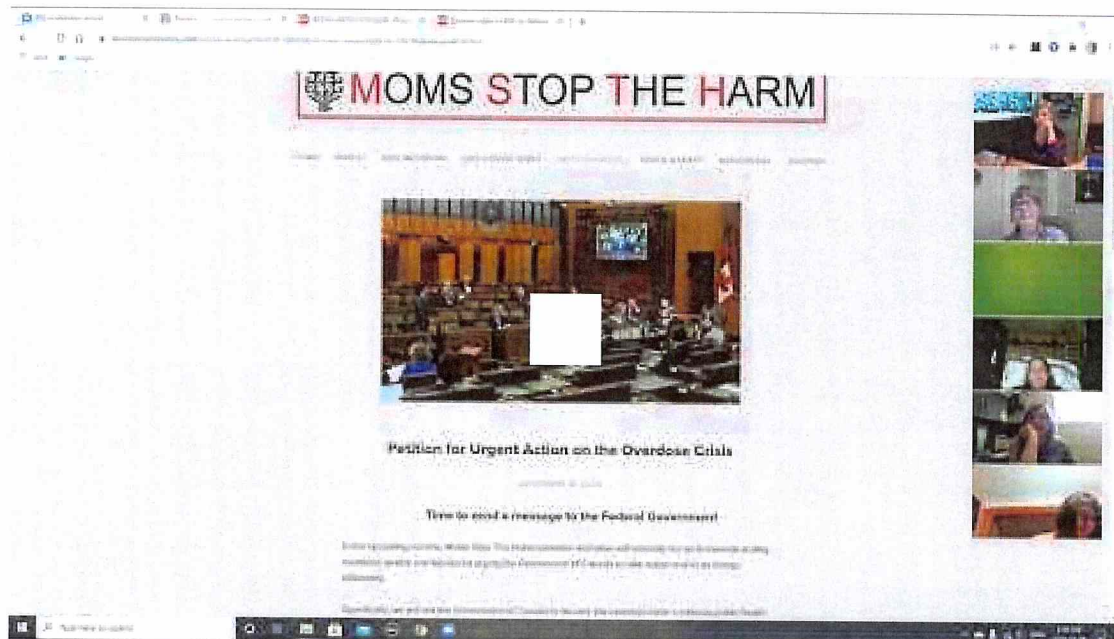
Step three: Call your MP in a couple of weeks if you haven't heard anything and ask if she or he will be presenting your petition in the House of Commons. What is said in the House of Commons is documented in the [Hansard Index](#), which will allow us to track the progress of our petitions. Please let us know if your MP is reluctant to do so, as we can help you find an MP who supports our cause. You can reach us at info[at]momsstoptheharm.com.

We have also added a [video link](#) here and included the video below to help you with instructions for gathering signatures and on how to submit the paper petition.

MSTH greatly appreciates your help with the petitions in order to bring the overdose crisis closer to the forefront of the government's agenda, where it belongs.

Lives depend on it!

For updates on the status of petitions presented in the house [check here.](#)



This webinar explains how you can be part of a campaign to ask the Government of Canada to declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency. The webinar explains how downloading a petition, collecting signatures and sending the signed petitions to your MP can easily be accomplished and make a big difference. Specifically we ask the the the federal government immediately collaborate with provinces and territories to develop a comprehensive, pan-Canadian overdose action plan. Ensure that any plan considers reforms that other countries have used, such as legal regulation of drugs to ensure safe supply, decriminalization for personal use, and changes to flawed drug policy and policing. Ensure this emergency is taken seriously with adequately funded programming and supports. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the overdose crisis is one of the most devastating public health emergencies our country has faced in a century. And it is time for the federal government to do more.

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