



The Honorable Bronna Kahle  
Chair, House Health Policy Committee  
124 North Capitol Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48933

September 30, 2021

**RE: Support for House Bill 5166**

Dear Representative Kahle:

2,354 Michiganders died from drug overdose and poisoning in 2019 and provisional data show this number increased 13 percent in 2020. Over three-quarters (76%) of 2019 drug overdose and poisoning deaths were caused by opioids – a fifty-fold increase since 1999.

These deaths are preventable. Yet availability of life-saving harm reduction services is inconsistent throughout Michigan. Harm reduction services are about meeting people where they are in their recovery journey and providing barrier-free access to life-saving resources. **House Bill 5166** will eliminate an unnecessary barrier that prevents community-based organizations from easily obtaining the overdose reversal medication naloxone by standing order. Naloxone is one of many tools people can use to help people recover from substance use disorder, but only 55% of Michigan's pharmacies participate in the naloxone standing order program. Community-based organizations fill this coverage gap and are the largest provider of naloxone kits in the state – distributing more than any other provider type. A guaranteed supply of naloxone to community-based organizations by standing order will save lives.

**Michigan Overdose Prevention Coalition (MOPC) strongly endorses House Bill 5166 as introduced and urges members of the House Health Policy Committee to support their passage.**

Formed in 2020, MOPC is a statewide network supporting expanded access to naloxone and syringe service programs in Michigan. Our 50 plus members have lived experience related to substance use and overdose—both personal and professional—via the healthcare system, syringe service programs, treatment programs, county associations, law enforcement, familial relationships, and harm reduction organizations. To learn more, visit our [website](https://mioverdoseprevention.com/) at <https://mioverdoseprevention.com/> or contact us any time. We are happy to be a resource for you and your colleagues.

Sincerely,

*Steve Alsum*

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