

**RESOLUTION NO. 17-04**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PALM BEACH COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES, INC., SUPPORTING THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (“CDC”) AND THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (“DOJ”) TO CURTAIL THE OVERPRESCRIBING OF OPIOIDS BY PHYSICIANS THROUGH MORE PHYSICIAN EDUCATION AS WELL AS BETTER RISK ASSESSMENT OF PATIENTS; STRENGTHENING OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING PROGRAMS IN EVERY STATE; ENSURING SAFE DRUG DISPOSAL; AND SUPPORTING THE EFFORTS OF THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON THE OPIOID AND HEROIN ABUSE EPIDEMIC TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION SHARING FOR CITIES AND COUNTIES; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**WHEREAS**, the Palm Beach County League of Cities, Inc. recognizes that the heroin and prescription opioid epidemic is one of the most urgent law enforcement and public health challenges facing our country; and

**WHEREAS**, opioids are a class of drugs that includes the illegal drug heroin as well as prescription power pain relievers, such as oxycodone (oxycontin), hydrocodone (vicodin), codeine, morphine, fentanyl, methadone, and many others; and

**WHEREAS**, on an average day in this country, health care professionals dispense more than 650,000 opioid prescriptions; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the CDC, opioids are commonly prescribed for pain. An estimated 20% of patients presenting to physician offices with noncancer pain symptoms or pain-related diagnoses receive an opioid prescription; and

**WHEREAS**, observational research showed significant increases in opioid prescriptions for pediatric populations from 2001 to 2010 and a large proportion of adolescents are commonly prescribed opioid pain medications for conditions such as headache and sports injuries; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Health and Human Services recently announced that 3.8 million people ages 12 and older are currently misusing prescription pain relievers in our country; and

**WHEREAS**, the use of prescribed opioid pain medication before high school graduation is associated with a 33% increase in the risk of later opioid misuse and the misuse of opioid pain medications in adolescence strongly predicts later onset of heroin use. Thus, the risk of opioid medication use in pediatric populations is of great concern; and

**WHEREAS**, opioid pain medication use presents serious risks, including overdose and opioid use disorder. From 1999 to 2014, more than 165,000 persons died from overdose related to opioid pain medication in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2014, more than 60% of the 47,000 drug overdose deaths in America involved opioids, reflecting a dramatic increase over the past two decades; and

**WHEREAS**, Palm Beach County fielded over 4,000 overdose calls and had more than 500 estimated opioid deaths in 2016; and

**WHEREAS**, on the average day at least 78 people will die from an opioid-related overdose, 3,900 people will use a prescription opioid outside of legitimate medical purposes and supervision, and 580 people will try heroin for the first time; and

**WHEREAS**, in the past decade while death rates for the top leading causes of death such as heart disease and cancer have decreased substantially, the death rate associated with opioid pain medication has increased markedly; and

**WHEREAS**, the sales of opioid pain medication have increased in parallel with opioid- related overdose deaths; and

**WHEREAS**, scientific research has identified high-risk prescribing practices that have contributed to the overdose epidemic; and

**WHEREAS**, the Drug Abuse Warning Network estimated that greater than 420,000 emergency department visits were related to the misuse or abuse of narcotic pain relievers in 2011, the most recent year for which data is available; and

**WHEREAS**, heroin and fentanyl caused the deaths of 2,333 Floridians in 2015 according to medical examiners' figures provided to the state and it is believed that the numbers are even higher for 2016, but the final figures are not yet in; and

**WHEREAS**, the war on prescription drugs and the pill mill crackdown has created opioid refugees who cannot get prescriptions for legal opioid painkillers filled and have turned to illegal ones instead resulting in a rise in heroin and synthetic street opioids as a result, and this needs to be addressed in the same manner as prescribed opioids; and

**WHEREAS**, the CDC created the CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain- United States, 2016 on March 18, 2016 in order to help curtail the overprescribing of opioids by physicians through more physician education as well as better risk and assessment of patients; and

**WHEREAS**, the DOJ through United States Attorney General, Loretta E. Lynch, sent a letter to the governor of every state on September 20, 2016 requesting their help in addressing the prescription opioid and heroin epidemic by requesting their assistance in strengthening prescription drug monitoring programs and ensuring safe drug disposal; and

**WHEREAS**, the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties formed a national joint task force to address the opioid and heroin abuse epidemic (the "City-County National Task Force on the Opioid Epidemic") on March 7, 2016 that is charged with starting a national dialogue for city and county elected leaders, providing educational opportunities for cities and counties, and providing a national summary report focusing on community prevention and overdose response, effective treatment options, and public safety enforcement and supply reduction.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE PALM BEACH COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES, INC. THAT:**

**Section 1:** The Palm Beach County League of Cities, Inc., and its membership, has seen a dramatic increase in overdose deaths due to heroin and opioids in the past year.

**Section 2:** The Palm Beach County League of Cities, Inc. supports the combined efforts of the CDC and DOJ in reducing the number of opioid prescriptions and ensuring safe disposal; and further supports the efforts of the City-County National Task Force on the Opioid Epidemic in educating cities and counties throughout the United States regarding this crisis.

**Section 3:** The Palm Beach County League of Cities, Inc. hereby directs staff to send a copy of this Resolution to Governor Rick Scott, Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi, U.S. Senator Bill Nelson, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio, U.S. Congressman Brian Mast, U.S. Congressman Alcee L. Hastings, U.S. Congresswoman Lois Frankel, U.S. Congressman Ted Deutch, State Senator Bobby Powell, State Senator Jeff Clemens, State Senator Joe Negron, State Senator Kevin J. Rader, State Representative Bill Hagar, State Representative Joseph Abruzzo, State Representative MaryLynn Magar, State Representative Rick Roth, State Representative Matt Willhite, State Representative David Silvers, State Representative Al Jacquet, State Representative Lori Berman, State Representative Emily Slosberg, the Board of County Commissioners for Palm Beach County, State Attorney Dave Aronberg, the Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation, and the Florida League of Cities,.

**Section 4:** This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption by the Board of Directors.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 26th day of April, 2017.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
THE PALM BEACH COUNTY  
LEAGUE OF CITIES, INC.



Robert M.W. Shalhoub, President

(SEAL)

ATTEST:  
  
Mo Thornton, Secretary/Treasurer