Governor Hogan Signs Legislation to Combat Heroin and Opioid Crisis

Posted by TBNDavid On 05/25/2017

ANNAPOLIS, MD - Governor Larry Hogan, along with Senate President Thomas V. “Mike” Miller and Speaker of the House Mike Busch, today signed 210 bills into law during the eighth bill signing ceremony in the State House following the conclusion of the 2017 session of the Maryland General Assembly. The bills signed include legislation to strengthen the state’s response to Maryland’s heroin and opioid crisis, as well as important state procurement reform initiatives, protections for victims of domestic violence, and an expansion of the administration’s innovative P-TECH schools program.

The governor signed the administration’s 2017 Heroin and Opioid Prevention, Treatment, and Enforcement Initiative legislation, including The Prescriber Limits Act of 2017 (HB 1432), which requires health care providers to prescribe the lowest effective dose of an opioid, and the Distribution of Opioids Resulting in Death Act (SB 539), which allows prosecutors to seek an additional 10 years for drug dealers who knowingly sell fentanyl and its analogs, including carfentanil, which recently caused at least four overdose deaths in the state.

“These critical initiatives will help us continue to lead the charge against Maryland’s heroin and the opioid crisis in our state,” said Governor Hogan. “Our administration remains committed to treating this crisis like the emergency that it is, and I thank the Legislature for working with us to provide additional tools to save the lives of Marylanders – before it’s too late.”

Governor Hogan also signed the Heroin and Opioid Prevention Effort (HOPE) and Treatment Act of 2017 (HB 1329/SB 967), a bipartisan omnibus bill that contains provisions to improve patient education, increase treatment services, and includes the administration’s Overdose Prevention Act, which enables all citizens to access life-saving naloxone. The Start Talking Maryland Act (HB 1082/SB 1060), also signed today, will increase school and community-based education and awareness efforts to continue to bring attention to the crisis and to equip our state’s youth with knowledge about the deadly consequences of opioids.

The governor and presiding officers also signed administration bills to modernize and streamline the state’s procurement system with standardized best practices, policies, and procedures that are more uniform, transparent, and equitable (HB426/SB311, HB390/SB310), as well as three privately sponsored procurement reform bills supported by the administration (HB1021, HB1107, HB1446).

“Creating a more centralized procurement system that ensures the efficient use of resources and produces a more consistent implementation of procurement law, regulation, policy, practice, and procedure is an important part of making state government more transparent and changing Maryland for the better,” said Lt. Governor Rutherford. “I would like to thank the legislature for collaborating with our administration on this important issue.”

Also signed today was Amber’s Law (HB 1163), named in memory of Amber Schinault, a law which will enable victims of domestic violence to request a judge to implement a GPS-tracking device in addition to a restraining order to actively monitor offenders.

Finally, the governor signed the administration’s Pathways in Technology Early College High (P-TECH) School Act of 2017 (SB 319), which establishes the funding formulas for the P-TECH program and makes technical and clarifying changes to the existing program set forth in the statute. The P-TECH education model, co-developed by IBM, is an innovative, nationally-recognized approach that blends high school, college, and work experience into one educational program. In six years or less, students graduate with a high school diploma and a two-year associate degree in a STEM career field. Two P-TECH schools, Carver-Vocational Technical High School and Dunbar High School, opened in Baltimore City in the 2016-17 school year. Additional P-TECH schools are set to open in the 2017-18 school year.

Copyright © 2019 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.