

Establishing A Policy To Support The County's Efforts To Combat Substance Abuse Prevention And Dedicate Revenue Received Through The New York State Medical Marijuana Excise Tax For Programs And Services To Further Address Narcotics Addiction

Referred to: The Public Health and Social Services Committee (Chairman Lopez and Legislators Allen, Belfiglio, Heppner, and Roberts), and The Ways and Means Committee (Chairman Gerentine and Legislators Allen, Bartels, Belfiglio, Briggs, Maio, and Maloney)

Legislator John R. Parete and Legislators Belfiglio, Heppner and Wawro offer the following:

WHEREAS, heroin and opioid abuse is a public health crisis in the State of New York, and in Ulster County which represents a startling share of victims; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Department of Health and Mental Health currently expends over \$1 million annually to support a comprehensive range of services to support the prevention and treatment of Alcohol and Substance Abuse; and

WHEREAS, in June 2014, Governor Cuomo signed into law a legislative package to combat this epidemic; and

WHEREAS, the Ulster County Legislature recognized the need to address the issue on the local level and created the Ulster Coalition of Against Narcotics (UCAN), by Resolution 371 of 2014 to study ways in which to identify how individuals can be helped, identify ways to prevent abuse, and identify ways in which to protect the public from opiate drug abuse in Ulster County and make related recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Adopted Budget allocated a 10 percent increase in the total dollars available to address opioid addiction in Ulster County; and

WHEREAS, these funds have been allocated to enhance a countywide prevention agenda and, based upon UCAN's recommendation, funds a dedicated family advocate to assist individuals and families with guidance on how to obtain alcohol and substance abuse treatment, provide assistance with navigating complex insurance regulations and requirements, and build further community awareness; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 90 of the Laws of 2014, the Compassionate Care Act, authorized the establishment of a medical marijuana program and authorized the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to regulate the manufacture and dispensing of medical marijuana; and

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WHEREAS, the NYSDOH has approved a medical marijuana dispensary to be sited within the County; and

WHEREAS, the Compassionate Care Act authorized the collection of a 7 percent excise tax to support the medical marijuana program and additional drug abuse prevention, counseling and treatment services, among other things; and

WHEREAS, the State Excise Tax, levied against the gross receipts of the organizations licensed to manufacture and distribute the medical marijuana, will result in an allocation of revenue to Ulster County; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Ulster County Legislature hereby supports efforts to combat substance abuse and hereby dedicates all revenue received as a result of the NYSDOH approved medical marijuana dispensary in Ulster County to be used for the prevention and treatment of narcotics addiction; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Commissioner of Finance shall establish an account to receive these funds and provide an annual report to the Legislature detailing the receipt and disbursement of funds; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the funds shall be used to support programming consistent with New York State regulation and such other programs approved by the Ulster County Legislature,

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: 23 NOES: 0

Passed Committee: Public Health and Social Services as amended on January 20, 2016

Passed Committee: Ways and Means on January 26, 2016

