

# STATE OF MINNESOTA

## Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

April 16, 2018

Representative Matt Dean  
Chair, House Health and Human  
Services Finance Policy Committee  
401 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Michelle Benson  
Chair, Senate Health and Human  
Services Finance Policy Committee  
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3109  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Representative Dave Baker  
539 State Office Building  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Senator Julie Rosen  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Minnesota Senate Building, Room 3109  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chairman Dean, Chairman Benson, Chairwoman Rosen and Representative Baker:

I write to you today regarding the status of the Opioid Stewardship Program and comprehensive legislation to address Minnesota's opioid crisis.

Eight weeks ago, at the beginning of session, Legislative Leaders agreed that addressing this devastating epidemic would be a top priority. Last week, I sent a letter to Legislative Leaders, asking that a bill addressing the opioid crisis be advanced quickly so that legislation can be enacted by the end of this month. As of today, the House and Senate have yet to vote on any of the proposed lifesaving measures.

Instead, the Legislative Majority has removed the Opioid Stewardship Program from the House bill, letting pharmaceutical companies who have played a major role in creating this deadly epidemic off the hook, and saddling taxpayers with the costs of opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery. As public servants, we should be protecting Minnesota families whose lives are being devastated by addiction, instead of protecting the special interests of the major pharmaceutical companies, who continue to perpetuate the problem.

I urge the Senate to support Chairwoman Rosen and Senator Eaton's Opioid Stewardship Program and require large pharmaceutical companies to contribute a minuscule amount of their enormous profits to address the crisis they have helped to create in our state. Representative Baker's original bill also included this important approach, and I urge the House to restore the requirement that the industry that helped to create this problem help pay to prevent future addictions and deaths.

The Legislature should also include provisions in the final bill that would get Naloxone into the hands of emergency responders as quickly as possible.

Chairman Dean, Chairman Benson  
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When I introduced my proposal to address the opioid crisis, I asked the Legislature to pass this legislation within the first week of session. That was 55 days ago, and little action has been taken.

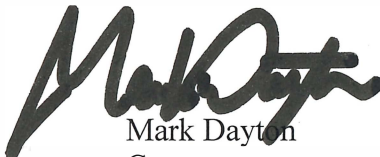
The Legislature must act now.

Minnesotans are dying every day as a result of opioid use. 395 Minnesotans died in 2016 alone. The greatest number of opioid-involved deaths (194 in 2016) involve commonly prescribed opioids. Our communities are struggling and families are being torn apart. The time to act for more treatment, more prevention, and more emergency services IS NOW. We cannot let another day go by before we get lifesaving Naloxone into the hands of first responders across the state.

I urge you to send me a clean bill addressing the opioid epidemic, paid for by the pharmaceutical companies, who continue to profit from it. And to do so immediately.

My Administration, Commissioners, staff, and I stand ready to work with you at any time to expedite this important work.

Sincerely,



Mark Dayton  
Governor

cc: The Honorable Paul Gazelka, Senate Majority Leader  
The Honorable Kurt Daudt, Speaker of the House  
The Honorable Tom Bakk, Senate Minority Leader  
The Honorable Melissa Hortman, House Minority Leader