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Press Release



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Statement from Governor Hassan on Senate Action on Substance Misuse Bills

CONCORD – Governor Maggie Hassan issued the following statement after the New Hampshire State Senate took action today on a series of bills related to substance misuse and the heroin and opioid crisis:

“As we continue working together to combat the heroin and opioid crisis and help save lives, each of these individual measures is a critical component of a comprehensive approach to support law enforcement and strengthen prevention, treatment and recovery. This includes efforts to ensure that more master licensed alcohol and drug counselors are eligible to practice in New Hampshire, to continue strengthening our prescription drug monitoring program and to build on our work to streamline access to treatment by removing certain prior authorizations.

“While I am grateful that the Senate is supporting additional resources for prevention, treatment and recovery programs, with an economy that continues to strengthen and strong revenues already outpacing projections by approximately \$60 million this year, we can afford to provide the full \$5 million for these critical programs, and it’s disappointing that so far the Senate has voted to cut this funding in half. At the same time, we need to move forward as quickly as possible with the additional attorney at the Department of Justice focused on opioid-related crimes to help the Attorney General pursue homicide charges for drug dealers.

“I commend the Senate for their actions today to strengthen our comprehensive approach to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, and I will continue working with members from both parties every single day on measures that will help us stem and reverse the tide of this horrible epidemic.”

In bipartisan votes, the Senate passed Senate Bill 423, relative to licensure of alcohol and drug abuse counselors from other jurisdictions; Senate Bill 523, relative to the controlled drug prescription health and safety program; and Senate Bill 532, relative to prior authorization for substance abuse treatment.

The Senate also voted to amend Senate Bill 533 and send it to the Senate Finance Committee for further work. Senate Bill 533 as amended still provides funding for the Governor’s Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Recovery for prevention, treatment and recovery providers to assist thousands of additional Granite Staters, but it cuts the Governor’s proposed funding in half from \$5 million to \$2.5 million. As amended, the bill also still includes roughly \$150,000 for an additional attorney at the Department of Justice focused on opioid-related crimes and issues, which would help the department pursue homicide charges for drug dealers.

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