

- HOME
- ABOUT GOVERNOR HASSAN
- ABOUT TOM HASSAN
- MEDIA CENTER
- JUST FOR KIDS
- CONTACT GOVERNOR HASSAN



Press Release



For Immediate Release

April 6, 2016

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Governor Hassan's Statement on Executive Council Approval of MOU for Governor's Advisor on Addiction and Behavioral Health

CONCORD – After a bipartisan vote by the Executive Council to approve funding through a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Health and Human Services and the Governor's Office for the Governor's Advisor on Addiction and Behavioral Health, Governor Maggie Hassan issued the following statement:

"Combating the heroin and opioid crisis requires us all to work together every single day on a comprehensive approach to support law enforcement and strengthen prevention, treatment and recovery, and the Governor's Advisor on Addiction and Behavioral Health is critical to those efforts. I thank the Executive Council for their bipartisan approval of a memorandum of understanding for the funding of this position, and I look forward to James Vara assuming this incredibly important responsibility."

As a Senior Assistant Attorney General at the Department of Justice, Vara has led the Drug Prosecution Unit in the Criminal Justice Bureau since January 2013. His primary caseloads include felony drug prosecution and drug-related death cases, and he serves on the New Hampshire Drug Task Force, as well as the co-chair of the Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Recovery's Opioid Task Force. Vara will begin work as the Governor's Advisor on Addiction and Behavioral Health tomorrow, April 7.

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