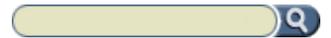


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Press Release



For Immediate Release

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Governor Hassan Signs Bipartisan Bill Establishing Statewide Drug Court Program

CONCORD - Continuing her efforts to implement a comprehensive approach to combat the heroin and opioid crisis and help save lives, Governor Maggie Hassan today signed a bipartisan bill establishing a statewide drug court program, a measure that she included in the comprehensive legislation that she proposed last fall.

By establishing a statewide drug court program, Senate Bill 464 provides more than \$2 million in matching state grants for counties to establish new drug courts and expand existing ones, as well as creates a statewide coordinator to work with the courts to ensure that best practices are being implemented.

"The heroin and opioid crisis is the most pressing public health and public safety challenge facing our state, and drug courts are an important tool in helping those battling addiction access treatment and recovery services," Governor Hassan said. "Our existing drug courts have proven successful in reducing crime, saving money and helping people return to their communities as contributing members of society through community supervision and intensive treatment, and establishing a statewide program will help build on that success to prevent people from slipping back into addiction and crime."

Senate Bill 464 also builds on the Governor's efforts to maintain fiscal responsibility and grow New Hampshire's Rainy Day Fund, transferring up to \$40 million into the Rainy Day Fund this fiscal year.

"Not only does this bipartisan bill play an important role in our comprehensive approach to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, it also builds on our progress to strengthen our Rainy Day Fund," Governor Hassan said. "Combined with doubling our Rainy Day Fund at the end of Fiscal Year 2015, the legislation that I signed eliminating the cap on single-year transfers and the \$30 million from the MtBE lawsuit, the Rainy Day Fund could reach more than \$90 million at the end of the current fiscal year."

Including Senate Bill 464, Governor Hassan has now signed – or will soon sign – numerous components of the comprehensive legislation that she proposed last fall. So far this year, the Governor has signed bipartisan legislation cracking down on fentanyl, limiting prior authorizations for treatment, making improvements to New Hampshire's prescription drug monitoring program and requiring all prescribing boards to update prescribing rules for opioids.

The Governor will also sign bipartisan measures providing an additional \$5 million for prevention, treatment and recovery programs as well as supportive housing and upgrading the technology for the prescription drug monitoring program when they reach her desk. And the legislature will return to Concord on Thursday, June 16, to consider a bill to support local law enforcement by expanding the successful Operation Granite Hammer statewide.

In addition, the Governor fought to reauthorize the bipartisan New Hampshire Health Protection Program, which has provided substance misuse and behavioral health services to thousands of Granite Staters, and she has revised licensing requirements to make it easier for providers to open treatment facilities, worked to increase the safe and effective use of Narcan, and launched a statewide substance misuse hotline to help connect individuals with resources 24 hours a day, seven days a week. She has also signed bipartisan bills allowing drug take-back programs at pharmacies, simplifying the licensing process for alcohol and drug abuse counselors moving to New Hampshire.

"By expanding existing drug courts and establishing new ones across the state, Senate Bill 464 is another important step forward in implementing our comprehensive approach to support law enforcement and strengthen prevention, treatment and recovery programs," Governor Hassan said. "I thank Judge Nadeau,

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all members of the judicial branch, our dedicated law enforcement officers, drug court advocates and legislators from both parties for their work to establish a statewide drug court program, and I look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that our drug courts are backed by increased treatment capacity and a robust, long-term recovery system."

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