

**A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY
LEGISLATORS LORIGO AND MILLS**

Re: Support for Opioid Crisis Related Services

WHEREAS, the opioid crisis here in Erie County has claimed the lives of hundreds of residents in the past year alone and only appears to be getting worse; and

WHEREAS, the causes of the crisis are varied and range from over prescription of opioid based pain killers to genetic predisposition to addiction and substance abuse. This crisis effects the lives of people in all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, there is a desire among all members of county government to aide residents and their families afflicted by addition. To that end, members of the Legislature have indicated a willingness to increase funding for programs and opportunities related to combatting the opioid crisis. The Erie County Legislature held a discussion in the Health and Human Services Committee with the Commissioner of Health, the Commissioner of Mental Health, the Erie County Sheriff's Office, the District Attorney's Office, and representatives of the private sector dedicated to providing assistance to addicts and their families including Crisis Services and Renaissance Addiction Services; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement experts in Erie County, including members of the Opioid Taskforce created by the County Executive, believe the crisis is going to continue for the foreseeable future possibly running over a decade before we are able to get it under control; and

WHEREAS, this honorably body finds that new and creative proposals are needed for dealing with the heroin and opioid crisis. During the Health and Human Services Committee discussion both the sheriff and the health department had potential suggestions for dealing with the opioid crisis; and

WHEREAS, the Sheriff has indicated a dire need for a Discharge Planner for inmates who struggled with addition prior to their incarceration. Their office cited statistics that almost 40 percent of all inmates that pass through the holding center and correctional facility are addicted to one or more illicit substances upon processing; and

WHEREAS, the Sheriff's Office finds that it takes the first five to fourteen days after processing for opiates to leave an inmates system. Inmates that remain incarcerated gain back weight and are able to remain sober with in-jail counseling and healthcare opportunities. However, upon release it does not take long for many of these people to fall back into addiction; and

WHEREAS, to address the post release problem the Sheriff recommends implementing programs that assist the prisoners in staying clean by connecting them through a Discharge Planner to counseling, career paths and health care providers after their release; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health indicated their own need for a new version Naloxone medication to be provided to first responders that has shown a better success rate than the medication provided by New York State; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of the Department of Health stated that time would be needed to properly find items to spending the additional funding on and has asked for an opportunity to collect proposals from public and private entities and to weigh those opportunities against one another to compete for limited taxpayer resources; and

WHEREAS, this honorable body finds that the efficiency gained in the Request for Proposals (RFP) process is extremely valuable and will allow for the treatment of the greatest number of people. The Commissioner of the Department of Health and other public and private entities expressed a desire to follow the required RFP process in determining what programs and techniques for addressing the opioid crisis would benefit the most from additional funding.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this honorable body hereby directs the Commissioner of the Department of Health to conduct an expedited Request for Proposals to collect ideas from county departments, public service providers, and law enforcement officials and to present those proposals to the Legislature as soon as is practicable; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this honorable body further directs the Budget Department to immediately set aside \$1,000,000 from undesignated fund balance for the purpose of fulfilling the RFP which will be provided by the Department of Health for remainder of the 2017 fiscal year; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to the Commissioner of the Health Department, the Director of the Budget Department, the Erie County Sheriff's Office, the Erie County Executive, and any other party deemed necessary and proper.

Fiscal Impact: \$1,000,000 funding in the undesignated fund balance for the county shall be earmarked for spending to combat the Opioid Crisis.