

Assembly Resolution No. 1481

BY: M. of A. Rules (Brown K)

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION memorializing Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 31, 2026, as Overdose Awareness Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days set aside to increase awareness of serious issues which affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 31, 2026, as Overdose Awareness Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of International Overdose Awareness Day; and

WHEREAS, International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) was established in Melbourne, Australia, in 2001; today, it has become a global campaign; in 2019, 874 IOAD events took place in 39 countries, surpassing the previous record tally of 747, set in 2018; and

WHEREAS, Since 2012, this annual global event has been planned by the not-for-profit Australian public health organization, Anex, which, in April of 2014, became a program of Penington Institute; and

WHEREAS, Penington Institute advances health and community safety by connecting substance use research to practical action; this vital foundation helps individuals and the wider community through research, analysis, promotion of effective strategies, workforce education and public awareness activities; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Department of Health, in its Opioid Annual Report for 2019, indicated deaths involving any opioid went from 0.9 per 100,000 population in 2010 to 11.3 in 2017, a 1,194 percent increase; and

WHEREAS, With deaths involving any opioid nearly tripling over the past decade the stigma around overdose related deaths has only forced individuals to suffer in silence; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day aims to raise awareness of overdose, reduce the stigma of drug-related deaths, and is an opportunity to stimulate discussion about evidence-based overdose prevention and drug policy; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day also acknowledges the grief felt by families and friends whose loved-ones have died or suffered permanent injury from a drug overdose, and spreads the message about the tragedy of drug overdose death and that drug overdose is preventable; and

WHEREAS, The goals of Overdose Awareness Day are to provide an opportunity for people to publicly mourn loved ones in a safe

environment, some for the first time without feeling guilt or shame; include the greatest number of people in Overdose Awareness Day events, and encourage non-denominational involvement; give community members information about the issue of fatal and non-fatal overdose; send a strong message to current and former people who use drugs that they are valued; stimulate discussion about overdose prevention and drug policy; provide basic information on the range of support services that are available; prevent and reduce drug-related harm by supporting evidence-based policy and practice; and inform people around the world about the risk of overdose; and

WHEREAS, Overdose Awareness Day is an opportunity to remember loved ones lost to overdose and is a "Time to remember. Time to Act."; and

WHEREAS, It is imperative that there be greater awareness of this serious health condition; the tragedy of overdose death is preventable and more must be done to save lives and increase activity at local, State and National levels; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim August 31, 2026, as Overdose Awareness Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York.