

1 S.104

2 Introduced by Senators Ram Hinsdale, Baruth, Bray, Brock, Champion,  
3 Chittenden, Clarkson, Collamore, Cummings, Gulick, Hardy,  
4 Harrison, Hashim, Ingalls, Kitchel, Lyons, MacDonald, Mazza,  
5 McCormack, Norris, Perchlik, Sears, Starr, Vyhovsky, Watson,  
6 Weeks, Westman, White, Williams and Wrenner

7 Referred to Committee on

8 Date:

9 Subject: General provisions; commemorative days; Overdose Awareness Day;  
10 flag-flying protocol

11 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to designate  
12 August 31 as Overdose Awareness Day and direct that the Vermont State flag  
13 be flown at half-staff on all State-owned flagpoles on this date.

14 An act relating to designating August 31 as Overdose Awareness Day

15 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

16 Sec. 1. FINDINGS

17 The General Assembly finds:

18 (1) According to the Vermont Department of Health:

19 (A) from 2020 to 2021, opioid-related fatal overdoses among  
20 Vermonters rose 33 percent from 158 to 210;

1           (B) 93 percent of the 2021 deaths involved the use of fentanyl;

2           (C) from January through October 2022, there were 190 opioid-  
3 related fatal overdoses of which 179 involved fentanyl; and

4           (D) since 2014, over 47,000 naloxone rescue kits have been  
5 distributed to Vermonters as an overdose prevention measure.

6           (2) International Overdose Awareness Day is observed on  
7 August 31 of each year to raise awareness of drug overdoses, to reduce the  
8 associated stigma, and to acknowledge the grief of the families and friends of  
9 persons who have experienced a drug overdose.

10           (3) Designating Overdose Awareness Day as a Vermont  
11 commemorative day recognizes the importance of each person who has  
12 experienced a drug overdose, and it reminds Vermonters that death due to a  
13 drug overdose is preventable.

14       Sec. 2. 1 V.S.A. § 378 is added to read:

15       § 378. OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

16       August 31 of each year is designated as Overdose Awareness Day.

17       Sec. 3. 1 V.S.A. § 496f is added to read:

18       § 496f. FLAG PROTOCOL; OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

19       The Department of Buildings and General Services shall direct, in the flag-  
20 flying protocol established in section 496d of this title, that the Vermont State

1 flag shall be flown at half-staff on all State-owned flagpoles on August 31 each  
2 year in observance of Overdose Awareness Day.

3 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

4 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.