

June 17, 2015

The Honorable Nicholas A. Mattiello, Speaker
Rhode Island House of Representatives
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Speaker of the House and Members of the Rhode Island House of Representatives,

We the undersigned are writing to express our concern regarding the limited immunity under the House version of the Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Act (H 5416-Sub A). It is our opinion as doctors, public health researchers, and advocates that expanding immunity under the Good Samaritan law is critical to addressing the problem of overdose. Please expand these protections so that all people feel safe calling 911 in the event of an overdose. Lives are on the line.

Sincerely,

Dr. Josiah Rich, MD, MPH, Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology, Brown University

Dr. David C. Lewis, MD, Founder, Brown University's Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies

Dr. James Crowley, MD, Former President of the Rhode Island Medical Society

Traci C. Green, Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Epidemiology, Brown University Alpert School of Medicine

Michelle McKenzie, MPH, Director of Preventing Overdose and Naloxone Intervention

Brandon DL Marshall, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Epidemiology at Brown University

Megan L. Ranney, MD, MPH, FACEP, Director of Brown Emergency Digital Health Innovation Program, Assistant Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine, Brown University Alpert School of Medicine

Janette Baird, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Emergency Medicine, Brown University Alpert School of Medicine

Rebecca Nieves McGoldrick, Executive Director of Protect Families First

American Civil Liberties Union of Rhode Island

Reverend James Keller, Presbyterian Church

Erin McDonough, Director, Naloxone and Overdose Prevention Education Rhode Island, State Coordinator, RIDMAT/MRC

Ian Knowles, Project Director of Rhode Island Communities for Addiction Recovery Efforts

Alexandria Macmadu, Sc.M., Senior Research Assistant, The Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights

David Ellison, Public Defender

Jonathan Goyer, Executive Director, Project Weber

Ronna Cabral, LCDP, Substance Use Counselor, Discovery House

Jim Ryczek, LICSW, Executive Director, Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless

LeeAnn Byrne, MSW, Policy Director, Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless

Ben Bouvier, Volunteer Outreach Worker and Testing Counselor, AIDS Care Ocean State, President, Brown University Students for Sensible Drug Policy

Juan Espinoza, Policy Chair, Young Democrats of Rhode Island

Robert Houghtaling, East Greenwich

Brian Sylvestre, Cranston

Diane Varone, Rumford