

SUPPORT FOR A WASHINGTON STATE SECURE MEDICINE TAKE-BACK PROGRAM TO REDUCE THE PUBLIC SAFETY IMPACTS OF UNWANTED MEDICINES

WHEREAS a significant number of medicines from households go unused or expire, and these drugs increase opportunities for drug abuse, drug diversion, and accidental poisonings when stored in homes, and

WHEREAS there is an epidemic of abuse and poisonings from prescription and over-the-counter drugs in our homes, with deaths due to drug overdoses in Washington now greater than deaths from car crashes, and

WHEREAS secure and safe disposal of unwanted medicines is a critical part of a comprehensive approach to reduce the supply of harmful and addictive drugs in the community, and

WHEREAS the DEA, Office of National Drug Control Policy, FDA, EPA, as well as state and local agencies, recommend the use of secure medicine take-back programs for proper disposal of medicines, and

WHEREAS medicine take-back programs protect public safety better than disposal of medicines in the household trash which is not secure or environmentally protective, and not allowed by local ordinances and policies in some Washington jurisdictions, and

WHEREAS the twice-a-year drug take-back events coordinated by DEA and provided with local law enforcement resources will end in 2012 when the DEA finalizes new regulations for take-back of controlled drugs, and

WHEREAS law enforcement and local government budgets in Washington State are constrained, and sustainable funding is needed to provide or continue ongoing medicine take back programs in Washington counties and cities, and

WHEREAS our communities are already struggling with the significant costs of drug abuse, accidental poisonings, overdoses, and drug-related crimes, and

WHEREAS the manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, as the originators of the drugs, have the greatest responsibility for providing secure systems for return of potentially harmful leftover and expired medicines.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the undersigned Washington law enforcement leaders support establishment of a secure, statewide medicine return program for unwanted medicines from households that is financed by pharmaceutical manufacturers, and that does not rely on state and local government funding.

12/27/2011
Date

Michael R. Cohen

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