

# THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

## RESOLUTION ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

### Resolution Summary

Misuse and abuse of prescription drugs intended to alleviate disease and eliminate pain often leads its victims down a path of addiction and even death. Unfortunately the problem is growing and has reached epidemic levels in many states. For example, in 16 states, prescription drug abuse causes more deaths than car crashes and nationally prescription drug overdoses are presently resulting in more deaths than even crack or heroin use according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To make matters worse, in 2007 alone, approximately 2.5 million people ranging from age 12 and up used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes for the first time. That averages to 7,000 people per day who are abusing prescription drugs for the first time.

Such statistics have led many states to seek ways to address the epidemic through the creation and passage of prescription monitoring programs. As of July 2010, 43 states have developed such programs, with 33 of those programs already operational. While these programs are a significant step in the fight to combat prescription drug abuse, the lack of interstate cooperation that currently exists has enabled individuals to game the system by crossing state lines to purchase large quantities of prescription drugs for both recreational use and distribution.

The next step in the fight against prescription drug abuse is the development of an interoperable system that allows states to securely share prescription drug data across state lines. In pursuit of this goal, The Council of State Governments, at the request of its members and through the National Center for Interstate Compacts, has been working with legislators, state PMP officials and interested stakeholders to develop the Prescription Monitoring Program Compact. Those involved in the development of the compact, including state legislators, state PMP administrators, federal officials and other interested stakeholders believe that interstate data sharing enhances the ability of states to promote better healthcare for patients and to curtail the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs.



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### RESOLUTION ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

**WHEREAS**, the misuse of prescription drugs intended to alleviate disease and eliminate pain often times leads to addiction and even death and such overdoses are a national epidemic more deadly than crack or heroin use;

**WHEREAS**, in 16 states prescription drug abuse is even more deadly than car crashes and in 2007 alone, approximately 2.5 million people ranging from age 12 and up used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes for the first time;

**WHEREAS**, states are leading the effort to reduce the abuse of prescription drugs through the formation of intrastate prescription drug monitoring programs, with 43 states having developed prescription drug monitoring programs and 33 states actively operating such programs; and

**WHEREAS**, the next step in the fight against prescription drug abuse is the development of an interstate system that permits the proper and secure sharing of prescription drug monitoring data across state lines in order to combat increased interstate prescription drug trafficking.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that The Council of State Governments (CSG) encourages states to adopt and support a robust and flexible intrastate prescription drug monitoring program to better track and prevent the illicit access to, distribution and use of prescription drugs;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that The Council of State Governments (CSG) encourages states to cooperate and share prescription drug monitoring data across state lines in order to curb the interstate trafficking of prescription drugs for illicit purposes while maintaining and respecting patient privacy and ensuring proper data security/access; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that The Council of State Governments(CSG) encourages states to explore all methods of interstate cooperation that facilitate the sharing of prescription drug monitoring data between states, including the recently completed Prescription Monitoring Program Compact.

Adopted by the Governing Board this 6<sup>th</sup> Day of December, 2010 at CSG's 2010 National Conference in Providence, Rhode Island.