

**State of Vermont
Executive Department
A Proclamation**

WHEREAS, Vermont saw a 10% increase in the number of fatal opioid overdoses between 2021 and 2022; and

WHEREAS, 239 Vermont residents lost their lives to overdose in 2022, making it the year with the highest number of fatal opioid overdoses to date; and

WHEREAS, 80 Vermonters have lost their life to an opioid overdose through April 2023; and

WHEREAS, a rapidly changing and increasingly toxic drug supply, including non-opioid adulterants that do not respond to overdose reversal tools like naloxone, continues to challenge efforts to combat overdoses in our state; and

WHEREAS, substance use disorder is a disease and should be addressed as a medical condition; and

WHEREAS, Vermonters experiencing opioid use disorder continue to face stigma which can be a barrier to reaching out for potentially life-saving harm reduction, treatment, or recovery services; and

WHEREAS, raising awareness about substance use disorder combats stigma and promotes health; and

WHEREAS, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery partners in Vermont continue to support the health of Vermonters in reducing their risk of overdose and provided continuous service despite the pandemic and recent natural disaster that hit our state; and

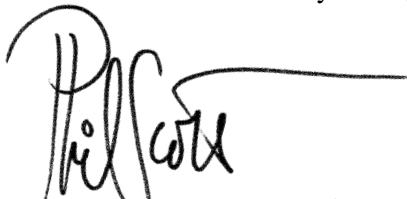
WHEREAS, government and public health leaders continue to increase investments in harm reduction, prevention, treatment, and recovery resources to strengthen and save lives; and

WHEREAS, awareness about the crisis in overdoses and deaths helps empower every Vermonter to be a knowledgeable, active participant and potential life saver should they encounter a fellow citizen in distress.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip B. Scott, Governor, hereby proclaim August 31, 2023, as

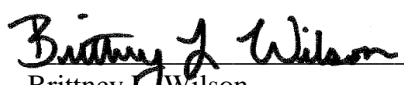
**OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY
in Vermont.**

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont on this 31st day of August, A.D. 2023.



Philip B. Scott
Governor




Brittney J. Wilson
Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs