

NOTICE OF MOTION
2021 FEBRUARY 08

Mayor Mike Hurley - Overdose Crisis

WHEREAS the overdose crisis continues to claim many lives, with 49 deaths in Burnaby between January and November 2020. This represents a 72% increase from 2019; and

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted access to harm reduction services, and fueled greater toxicity within the illicit drug supply; and

WHEREAS Premier Horgan wrote to Prime Minister Trudeau on July 20, 2020, asking the federal government to decriminalize personal possession of all psychoactive substances, as a necessary next step to reduce the stigma associated with substance use and encourage people at risk to access lifesaving harm reduction and treatment services; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police agree that decriminalization of simple possession is an effective way to reduce public health and public safety harms associated with substance use and endorses alternatives to criminal sanctions for simple possession of illicit drugs; and

WHEREAS Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry has called for the decriminalization of personal possession of illegal substances, as an urgent and necessary next step to addressing the overdose crisis; and

WHEREAS decriminalization is a step toward addressing anti-Black, anti-poor, and colonial policing at this time.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada declare the overdose crisis a national public health emergency so that it is taken seriously and funded appropriately; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Government of Canada immediately seek input from the people most affected by this crisis and meet with provinces/territories and local governments to develop a comprehensive, pan-Canadian overdose action plan.

Copy: City Manager Director Corporate Services Director Planning and Building Director Public Safety & Community Services
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