

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 123

Recognizing the week of March 19 through March 25, 2023, as “National Poison Prevention Week” and encouraging communities across the United States to raise awareness of the dangers of poisoning and promote poison prevention.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 23, 2023

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the week of March 19 through March 25, 2023, as “National Poison Prevention Week” and encouraging communities across the United States to raise awareness of the dangers of poisoning and promote poison prevention.

Whereas the designation of National Poison Prevention Week was first authorized by Congress and President Kennedy in 1961, in Public Law 87–319 (75 Stat. 681);

Whereas National Poison Prevention Week occurs during the third full week of March each year;

Whereas, in 2021 to 2022, poison centers managed more than 5,000,000 human exposure cases and information requests, including—

- (1) opioid and fentanyl misuse;
- (2) suicide attempts, including those among adolescents and teenagers; and
- (3) accidental edible cannabis ingestion;

Whereas poison centers are on the front lines assisting throughout the United States with emergency disasters in our communities, including the East Palestine, Ohio, train derailment where Ohio poison centers are working around the clock with Federal, State, and local officials, as well as other poison centers including, the Pittsburgh Poison Center, to ensure that impacted communities have the resources they need to have their questions answered, and to provide guidance to local healthcare providers on how to assist people experiencing symptoms;

Whereas poison control centers responded during the COVID–19 pandemic to COVID–19 related surges by conducting poison safety and poisoning prevention outreach in a virtual format, and handled increases in cases relating to hand sanitizer and household cleaning products;

Whereas America’s Poison Centers works with the 55 poison control centers in the United States to track—

- (1) more than 1,000 commonly used household and workplace products that can cause poisoning; and
- (2) poisonings and the sources of those poisonings;

Whereas the National Poison Data System database contains over 447,000 products, ranging from viral and bacterial agents to commercial chemical and drug products;

Whereas local poison control centers save the people of the United States \$1,800,000,000 in medical costs annually;

Whereas America’s Poison Centers and poison control centers partner with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, and State, local, Tribal, and territorial health departments to monitor occurrences of environmental, biological, and emerging threats in communities across the United States, including food poisoning, botulism, and vaping-associated lung injury;

Whereas, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, in 2020, an estimated 61,500 children younger than 5 years of age were treated in emergency rooms due to unintended poisonings;

Whereas, in 2021, children younger than 6 years of age constituted 41 percent of all poison exposures;

Whereas, from 2012 to 2022, the number of adolescents 10 to 19 years of age seen for a suicide attempt has nearly doubled, and that has disproportionately affected female adolescents;

Whereas, in 2022, more than 90,000 children 19 years of age and younger were treated in an emergency room due to unintended pediatric poisoning, and more than 90 percent of those incidents occurred in the home, most often with acetaminophen, edible cannabis, melatonin, ibuprofen, laundry packets, bleach, diphenhydramine, blood pressure medications, sedatives, and anti-anxiety medication;

Whereas an analysis of the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System shows—

- (1) an increased incidence of ingestion of dangerous foreign bodies like button batteries and high-powered magnets during the COVID–19 pandemic; and

(2) evidence that parents and caregivers sought care for foreign body ingestions either because they knew the relative danger of the object ingested or because they sought advice from available resources like the poison control centers;

Whereas 107,622 deaths due to drug overdose were reported in the United States in 2021, and the majority of those cases, approximately 71 percent, involved an opioid, primarily synthetic opioids like fentanyl;

Whereas, in 2021, the most common substances that individuals called the poison help line about were prescription and non-prescription pain relievers, household cleaning substances, cosmetics and personal care products, and antidepressants;

Whereas pain medications lead the list of the most common substances implicated in adult poison exposures, and are the single most frequent cause of pediatric fatalities reported to America's Poison Centers;

Whereas poison control centers issue guidance and provide support to individuals, including individuals who experience medication and dosing errors;

Whereas more than 40 percent of calls to the poison help line are from individuals 20 years of age or older, with nearly 50 percent of those calls involving patients older than 50 years of age, and a common reason for those calls is therapeutic errors, including questions regarding drug interactions, incorrect dosing route, timing of doses, and double doses;

Whereas normal, curious children younger than 6 years of age are in stages of growth and development in which they are constantly exploring and investigating the world

around them, and are often unable to read or recognize warning labels;

Whereas America’s Poison Centers engages in community outreach by educating the public on poison safety and poisoning prevention, and provides educational resources, materials, and guidelines to educate the public on poisoning prevention;

Whereas individuals can reach a poison control center from anywhere in the United States by calling the poison help line at 1–800–222–1222 or accessing PoisonHelp.org;

Whereas, despite regulations of the Consumer Product Safety Commission requiring that a child-resistant package be designed or constructed to be significantly difficult for children under 5 years of age to open, or obtain a harmful amount of the contents, within a reasonable time, children can still open child-resistant packages; and

Whereas, each year during National Poison Prevention Week, the Federal Government assesses the progress made by the Federal Government in saving lives and reaffirms the national commitment of the Federal Government to preventing injuries and deaths from poisoning: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the week of March 19 through
3 March 25, 2023, as “National Poison Prevention
4 Week”;

5 (2) expresses gratitude for the people who oper-
6 ate or support poison control centers in their local
7 communities;

1 (3) expresses gratitude for frontline workers
2 supporting poison prevention during the COVID–19
3 pandemic;

4 (4) supports efforts and resources to provide
5 poison prevention guidance or emergency assistance
6 in response to poisonings; and

7 (5) encourages—

8 (A) the people of the United States to edu-
9 cate their communities and families about poi-
10 son safety and poisoning prevention; and

11 (B) health care providers to practice and
12 promote poison safety and poisoning prevention.

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