

1 A RESOLUTION encouraging the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to  
2 explore substance use disorder among older adults in Kentucky.

3 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky currently ranks sixth nationally in  
4 percentage of aging population, and substance abuse and misuse in older adults are  
5 increasing, yet the evidence of avoidable morbidity, mortality, and related physical and  
6 economic abuse is poorly understood; and

7 WHEREAS, Kentucky has one of the highest prescriptions per capita rates in the  
8 United States, and the consumption of prescription drugs increases as people age and  
9 diseases progress, too often culminating in prescription substance abuse; and

10 WHEREAS, the second quarter 2017 KASPER report shows that the rate of opioid  
11 prescriptions dispensed per 1,000 persons increases with age, from 140 per 1,000 for  
12 individuals age 17 to 24, to almost 900 per 1,000 for individuals age 65 and over; and

13 WHEREAS, data from 2015 emergency department visits for drug overdose  
14 indicates the most common drugs for overdose in persons over 44 years of age are  
15 gabapentin, an anti-epileptic drug; oxycodone; and Lisinopril; all medications commonly  
16 used in older adults living with chronic disease; and

17 WHEREAS, 2015 data reported an increase of 58 percent in the rate of emergency  
18 room visits in Kentucky for drug overdose in persons age 25 to 34 and over 55; and  
19 people age 35 to 54 were the largest demographic in overdose deaths; and

20 WHEREAS, data from the second quarter of 2017 in Kentucky reveals high  
21 potential for substance abuse and misuse in older adults and aging middle-aged adults;  
22 and

23 WHEREAS, the most common identified drug in overdose decedents over the age  
24 of 45 is gabapentin; and in overdose decedents under the age of 45, it is morphine; and

25 WHEREAS, drug overdose hospital discharges show a trend toward middle-aged  
26 and older adults, and most overdose discharges were persons over the age of 45;

27 NOW, THEREFORE,

1 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*  
2 *Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3       ➔Section 1. The House of Representatives encourages the Cabinet for Health and  
4 Family Services to explore substance use disorder in older adults in Kentucky and  
5 examine issues including but not be limited to:

- 6       (1) The costs and harm related to criminal, social, and health patterns;  
7       (2) Future trends in substance abuse and misuse in older adults; and  
8       (3) The preventative strategies in the younger population due to emerging  
9 evidence of environmental influence to substance abuse and misuse.

10       ➔Section 2. The House of Representatives urges the Cabinet for Health and  
11 Family Services to, whenever possible, collaborate with interdisciplinary experts from the  
12 following fields related to health and wellness: public health, sociology, psychology,  
13 economics, criminal justice, and policy in the study of substance abuse and misuse.

14       ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a  
15 copy of this Resolution to Timothy Feeley, Deputy Secretary of the Cabinet for Health  
16 and Family Services at 275 E. Main Street, 5 W-A, Frankfort, Kentucky 40621.