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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1956**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2024 Regular Session**

**By** House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Leavitt, Griffey, Ryu, Couture, Ramel, Slatter, Reed, Ormsby, Barnard, Callan, Timmons, Kloba, Cheney, Doglio, Paul, Berg, Lekanoff, Reeves, Riccelli, Wylie, Hackney, Pollet, and Shavers; by request of Office of the Governor)

READ FIRST TIME 01/29/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to fentanyl and other substance use prevention  
2 education; adding a new section to chapter 43.70 RCW; adding a new  
3 section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that overdoses  
6 and overdose deaths, particularly from synthetic opioids, have  
7 increased in recent years. According to the federal centers for  
8 disease control and prevention, among persons aged 14 through 18,  
9 overdose deaths increased 94 percent from 2019 to 2020 and 20 percent  
10 from 2020 to 2021. In 2021, over 75 percent of all drug overdose  
11 deaths involved opioids, with synthetic opioids, including fentanyl,  
12 accounting for nearly 88 percent of those deaths. Between 2022 and  
13 2023, Washington saw the largest increase in overdose deaths of any  
14 state at 40 percent.

15 (2) The legislature recognizes that fatal overdose risk among  
16 adolescents is increasing due to widespread availability of illicitly  
17 manufactured fentanyl, proliferation of counterfeit pills resembling  
18 prescription drugs but containing illicit drugs, and ease of  
19 purchasing pills through social media. The United States drug  
20 enforcement administration states that there is significant risk that  
21 illegal drugs have been intentionally contaminated with fentanyl. As

1 a result, many young people may ingest a lethal dose without knowing  
2 that they are consuming fentanyl.

3 (3) The legislature acknowledges that the level of public health  
4 crisis created by use of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids  
5 requires an immediate, substantial, and coordinated effort by  
6 national, state, and local public health, social service, and  
7 educational agencies working together.

8 (4) The legislature also acknowledges that the popularity of  
9 drugs grows and wanes forming distinct drug epidemics, similar to  
10 disease epidemics. As the popularity and availability of synthetic  
11 opioids wanes, it is likely that some other substance will pose the  
12 next acute public health crisis.

13 (5) Therefore, in order to combat the current public health  
14 crisis of abuse of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, and to be  
15 prepared to address the next drug epidemic before it reaches crisis  
16 level, the legislature intends to direct the state department of  
17 health to deploy a statewide substance use prevention and awareness  
18 campaign that evolves to address the substance or substances with the  
19 greatest impact on the health of Washington youth and their families,  
20 diverse regions and communities, and the broader public. The  
21 legislature also intends for the public education system to actively  
22 incorporate campaign messages and materials in classrooms, as well as  
23 in family and community communications.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.70  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 (1)(a) The secretary shall annually develop and deploy a  
27 statewide multimedia substance use prevention and awareness campaign  
28 that evolves to address the substance or substances with the greatest  
29 impact on the health of Washington youth and their families, diverse  
30 regions and communities, and the broader public.

31 (b) Campaign messages and materials must include information on  
32 the "good Samaritan overdose law," RCW 69.50.315.

33 (c) Campaign messages and materials designed for target groups  
34 must connect and be reinforced by the statewide messages and  
35 materials.

36 (d) Campaign messages and materials must be actively distributed  
37 to diverse regions and communities, for example via stores, schools,  
38 churches, and community organizations, and through multiple formats,  
39 for example via social media, posters, and advertisements.

1 (2) The campaign must be developed in partnership with the  
2 governor's interagency coordinating council on health disparities  
3 created in RCW 43.20.275.

4 (3) The 2024 and 2025 campaigns must focus on increasing the  
5 awareness of the dangers of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids,  
6 including the high possibility that other drugs are contaminated with  
7 synthetic opioids and that even trace amounts of synthetic opioids  
8 can be lethal. These campaigns must also provide overdose prevention  
9 and addiction treatment information.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
11 RCW to read as follows:

12 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
13 collaborate with the department of health to develop age-appropriate  
14 substance use prevention and awareness materials for school and  
15 classroom uses. These materials must be periodically updated to align  
16 with the annual substance use prevention and awareness campaign  
17 described in section 2 of this act.

18 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
19 actively distribute the materials developed under subsection (1) of  
20 this section to school districts, public schools, educational service  
21 districts, and community-based organizations that provide extended  
22 learning opportunities, and strongly encourage the incorporation of  
23 age-appropriate materials in classrooms, as well as in family and  
24 community communications.

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