



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2018

NCADA advocates diligently for laws and ordinances that would prevent or reduce the harms associated with alcohol and other drugs.

PRIORITY ISSUES INCLUDE:

State Funding for School Based Prevention

Budgets are reflections of priorities. We know that every \$1 invested in prevention of harms associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs saves our community \$7-\$18 in treatment, crime, and other social costs. Few other investments yield such a return. We encourage both public and private investment in prevention education as an evidence-based strategy to help communities thrive.

State Funding for Naloxone

Anyone at risk of witnessing or experiencing an opioid overdose should have access to naloxone, the overdose reversal medication. As the opioid epidemic continues to grow, police and firefighters often arrive on the scene of an overdose before EMS. This is particularly true in our more rural communities. Many of these departments do not have the budget to purchase naloxone, and the existing grants are unable to meet the demand. Therefore, we ask that the Missouri General assembly provide funding for emergency responder agencies to purchase and equip their officers with naloxone.

State Funding for Treatment of Substance Use Disorders

Evidence-based treatment works to address substance use disorders. Unfortunately for uninsured Missourians, public treatment, if available at all, has a long waiting list. Investing in evidence-based treatment helps Missourians find recovery, and strengthens our communities.

Narcotics Control Act

The Narcotics Control Act would establish a statewide prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP), allowing health service providers to ensure that individuals are not

given duplicate prescriptions for controlled substances, which may be misused or sold to others. The Narcotics Control Act would also reduce the likelihood of medications negatively interacting with one another.

Many communities across the state have adopted this common sense policy locally to prevent misuse of and addiction to prescription medications in our communities. We encourage the Missouri General Assembly to take up and pass such legislation statewide.

Mental Health Parity

Mental health parity laws were created to require health insurance plans to cover treatment for mental health conditions in the same way they cover other ailments. However, treatment of substance use disorder is currently exempt from mandatory coverage under Missouri's mental health parity laws, leaving many insured Missourians unable to access affordable treatment. It's critical that this exception be removed to allow people with substance use disorder to obtain treatment.

Reduction in Youth Access to Nicotine

NCADA supports legislation that decreases a minor's exposure to cigarette, cigar, and hookah smoke, as well as vapor from e-cigarettes and vaporizers. This includes a statewide version of Tobacco 21, an ordinance passed by many municipalities to limit the purchase of nicotine products to people 21 and older. Additionally, legislation that toughens penalties for selling or providing nicotine products to minors is a proven strategy for delaying the age of first use and reducing rates of addiction.

Marijuana Policy

NCADA supports policies which reduce the availability of marijuana to youth. Even while this drug remains illegal, we are seeing

increasing use and addiction in adults and youth. Any policy that creates a commercial, legal market, in which it becomes easier for minors to access marijuana, is not the solution.

While continued prohibition is not effective, the commercialization of a third legal, addictive substance is not a good public health alternative. We believe it is not a simple binary choice between continued prohibition and commercialization, and we believe such middle ground should be considered.

Syringe Access Programs

People who inject drugs are at a dramatically higher risk of contracting blood borne diseases such as HIV, hepatitis C, and other infections. Needle exchanges decrease the prevalence of these infections with no increase in IV substance use. In addition, such programs have shown an increase in the drug user's willingness to enter treatment. Allowing needle exchange programs to exist in Missouri will help save lives and decrease healthcare costs in our communities.

Reducing Youth Access to Alcohol

NCADA supports policies that toughen penalties for sales and serving to minors, deters parents from providing, ensures minors don't have access to easily concealable, easily misused products like powdered alcohol, and raises alcohol excise taxes. These steps are essential to fighting underage drinking. Earlier age of initial use is highly correlated to alcohol related problems later in life, and NCADA supports efforts to reduce underage alcohol consumption.

CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS

Join us and make sure that your voice is heard. You can make a difference. Legislators and policy makers look to you for input on these important issues. Just a few phone calls or letters from constituents can make all of the difference.

Please take the time to call or write your city and county elected officials, and your representatives and senators. If you don't know who your legislators are, visit votesmart.org.