



**JAMES J. O'DAY**  
**REPRESENTATIVE**  
14TH WORCESTER DISTRICT

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*House of Representatives*  
*State House, Boston, MA 02133-1054*

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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**STATE REPRESENTATIVE JAMES O'DAY FILES OPIOID STEWARDSHIP BILL**

*This Bill Aims To Compensate Victims of Opioids by Enacting a Drug Stewardship Assessment on Opioid Manufacturers*

**Boston, MA, March 18, 2019**—State Representative James O'Day (D - 14<sup>th</sup> Worcester District) filed An Act Relative to Compensation for Victims of Opioids (HD.1734), which aims to defray the costs of the opioid epidemic by enacting a drug stewardship assessment on opioid manufacturers doing business in the Commonwealth.

In Massachusetts, the opioid-related death rate is among the highest in the nation and more than double the national average. Although opioid-related overdoses in Massachusetts dropped by 4 percent in 2018, the number of deaths is still startlingly high. In 2018, at least five people died of an opioid overdose every day – totaling to nearly 2,000 lives lost. Pharmaceutical companies have been marketing opioids as safe and effective for treating chronic pain, despite evidence that the proven risks outweigh the proven benefits in most cases. By 2020, the opioid industry will have an annual market of \$18.4 billion in the United States.

This bill aims to defray the enormous costs of the opioid epidemic by enacting a drug stewardship assessment on opioid manufacturers doing business in Massachusetts. The funds collected will be deposited to a substance abuse services fund to be used for substance use disorder prevention intervention, recovery, and treatment strategies. Under this legislation, the total amount paid by manufacturers would be informed by the total cost of opioid addiction treatment and recovery services to the Commonwealth. Through a performance improvement process, the Health Policy Commission would work with manufacturers to prevent this assessment from being translated into increased costs for consumers.

“Far too many members of our communities have been affected or taken from us by the opioid crisis,” said State Representative O'Day. “This legislation is an important opportunity to hold opioid manufacturers accountable for the devastating effects their reckless – and even deceitful – marketing has had in the commonwealth.”

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