



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
FOR THE NORFOLK DISTRICT

45 SHAWMUT ROAD  
CANTON, MA 02021  
(781) 830.4800  
FAX (781) 830.4801

**MICHAEL W. MORRISSEY**  
NORFOLK DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## Press Release

### DA Morrissey meets with Sen. Markey, asks Federal drug czar to declassify Narcan

Contact: D.Traub, 781-830-4917



Sen. Edward J. Markey was joined at the Taunton Central Fire Station yesterday by White House Drug Policy Director R. Gil Kerlikoske two dozen local and national leaders in the fight to turn back the opiate addiction and overdose epidemic overspreading Massachusetts.

District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey used the occasion to ask Kerlikoske to push for a regulatory change at the Food and Drug Administration that would begin to save lives the day it was implemented: Make the overdose reversal drug naloxone, or Narcan, an over-the-counter or behind-the-counter drug – readily available to first responders and anyone else.

“The Quincy Police Department has had amazing success in preserving human life since it became the first department in the country to equip its cruisers with Narcan,” District Attorney Morrissey said after the event, which drew regional and national press coverage. “Now Norwood and Stoughton Police have implemented Narcan, and now Braintree and Weymouth fire have it as well.”

Morrissey is offering Narcan training and funding a starter batch of Narcan doses for any police or fire department in Norfolk County willing to take the training March 26. But implementation while Narcan remains a prescription-only drug means regulation, complication, delay and sometimes resistance – all of which would disappear if the FDA would remove the drug’s prescription status. “There is no potential for abuse or overdose with Narcan, it has no euphoric or addictive properties. It saves the addict’s life and allows them to be transported to a hospital for further treatment – and hopefully get straight. Period.”

After emerging from his closed-door meeting with local first responders, law enforcement and advocates, Senator Markey outlined a three-pronged plan to address the opiate drug epidemic, calling for expansion of naloxone programs for first responders and bystanders ( like those Morrissey is implementing or advocating) greater access to proven addiction treatments and modernizing America’s addiction treatment system.

“There are so many avenues to attack this problem,” Morrissey said. “Given the loss of life, loss of productivity and criminal activity associated with opiate use in this region, we need to be taking all of them.”

Norfolk County saw 60 confirmed fatal opiate overdoses in 2013, more than the entire states of Maine, Vermont or New Hampshire in 2012, Morrissey said. “There have been another dozen since the first of the year – and those are the ones we know about. The time to act is now. Right now.”