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David J Lozier, Beaver County DA Working public remarks June 2016

HOW BAD IS THE HEROIN CRISIS IN BEAVER COUNTY?

- Due to the high rate of prescription pain killers and the high rate of work related injuries in West Virginia, SE Ohio and SW Pa, we are the epicenter of the national current opioid-heroin crisis.
- We have as high a rate of overdoses and opioid related deaths as any county in Pa.
- We are averaging as many overdoses per month in 2016 as we had in all of 2010.
- We are averaging 2 opioid deaths per week in Beaver County, as many as 5 in one day.
- Almost all opioid deaths are the result of a mixture of heroin and abused pain killers.
- The overdoses and opioid deaths hit every race, age, sex, occupation, economic strata, and municipality, and if we are honest it is affecting every family.

Experts trace at least 80% of all heroin addictions to the abuse of prescription opioids, and most prescription drug abusers start out on a legally prescribed pain killer.

Far too many high school athletes suffer a sports injury, are prescribed pain medications for too long a period, and develop a life destroying addiction which leads to heroin. Their younger brains seem more susceptible to addiction.

A high percentage of the 4,000 criminal cases we will prosecute this year are drug related.

WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

- Working with every federal and state agency to track drug dealers and prosecute them to the fullest extent. We are not bargaining down felony drug charges or felony gun charges.
- Joint task forces with our County Detectives, municipal police, state police, state attorney general, FBI and DEA in the streets every day.

This opioid problem has been growing and expanding for decades it will not be solved overnight.

We will not arrest our way out of this problem.

If I/We treat the prescription and heroin abuse crisis only as a criminal justice problem, I/We will be failing Beaver County.

We need to Educate, Prevent, Intervene and Treat.

- We are working with the Pa AG and the FBI, the Sheriff and the Coroner, to go into the schools, preferably the junior high schools, to educate them on

the choices they make, to inform them of the connection between prescription pills and heroin, abuse and death. Choices.

- We are working with schools, police, sheriff and jail to get Narcan/Naloxone into the hands of those who may be in the vicinity of an overdose, if we intervene and save one life we may be able to treat and rehabilitate that survivor.
- We are working with Beaver County Adult Probation, Beaver County Behavioral Health and Drug Treatment Providers to find treatment beds, detox beds, and to develop diversion programs to get care to the addict. For the newer addict treatment is far more important a goal than incarceration.
- We hope to establish a Drug Rehabilitation Court in Beaver County. A Drug Court would allow us to use the authority of the entire criminal justice system to intervene in individual cases to design intervention programs tailored to the individual addict. Only intense supervision by family, employers, adult probation and rehab experts provide a serious chance at successful rehabilitation.

WHAT CAN CONGRESS DO?

- We need to work with our federal legislators to reform the Medicare/Medicaid system to require continuing care to addicts in the emergency rooms so they get the care they need, the detox and rehab. If the Medicare/Medicaid payment model is changed we will greatly increase our success drug rehab rate.

WHAT CAN THE STATE LEGISLATURE DO?

- We need a better tool to prosecute drug dealers who cause overdoses and overdose related deaths. Heroin dealers are lacing heroin with Fentanyl to

boost their sales. This combination is causing the majority of the heroin overdoses and opioid deaths.

- The Federal government now has a statute to prosecute a drug dealer who sells drugs resulting in death or serious bodily injury—an overdose. It carries 20 years to life sentence.
- We have no equivalent in Pennsylvania. Crimes Code Section 2506 rates the sale of drugs resulting in death as a homicide with a sentence of up to 40 years. Give us a form of Aggravated Assault for dealing drugs resulting in serious bodily injury.
- I recommend amending Crimes Code Section 2702 (a) to reflect Section 2506, as follows: “intentionally administers, delivers, gives, prescribes, sells or distributes any controlled substance or counterfeit controlled substance in violation of the Controlled Substance Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, and causes serious bodily harm to another person.”

Beaver County States if relevant and time allows:

OD's, soft estimates, by year

2011- 61

2012-190

2012-219

2013-287

2015-328

2016 OD's by month, good numbers

Jan-44

Feb-38

Mar-49

April-41-----on track for over 500 for 2016

Opioid Related OD Deaths

2014-30

2015-37

2016-20 ruled opioid, 7 suspected awaiting labs, through May 15

On track for over 60 for 2016