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Baker-Polito Administration and Attorney General's Office Launch Statewide Campaign to Highlight Importance of Calling 911 During an Overdose

BOSTON – Governor Charlie Baker and Attorney General Maura Healey announced today, a new public information campaign to encourage people to call 911 for emergency medical services at the first signs of a drug overdose. Along with Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders, Department of Public Health Commissioner Monica Bharel and members of the law enforcement community, state
officials launched the $250,000 Make the Right Call campaign to promote the Massachusetts 911 Good Samaritan Law.

This law provides protection to individuals seeking medical assistance for themselves or someone else experiencing a drug-related overdose, including opioid-related overdoses, without the risk of charges of possession of a controlled substance.

Governor Baker, Attorney General Healey, Secretary Sudders, Commissioner Bharel, Walpole Chief of Police Carmichael and Caitrin Houlihan
Room 157, Press Briefing Room, Massachusetts State House
May 17, 2016

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Transcription:

GOVERNOR BAKER: Today we're proud to announce, along with the Attorney General, a partnership for a $250,000 campaign to encourage people to call 911 at the first sign of a drug overdose. The Make the Right Call campaign will spread the word about the Massachusetts 911 Good Samaritan Law which was initially signed in 2012.

ATTORNEY GENERAL HEALEY: What the Good Samaritan Law says is that if you see someone overdosing, if you're with someone who is overdosing, call 911. Get them help. And if you do call 911 to save that person's life you will not be prosecuted for drug use or possession.

SECRETARY SUDDERS: Addictions are a disease and just like if we saw someone on the side of the street who had collapsed from a heart attack, we would stop and we would call 911 and that is what this campaign is about.

CHIEF CARMICHAEL: The primary purpose of law enforcement when responding to these calls is to preserve the lives of people that are suffering from these overdoses. We want to be clear that the message today is that we asked people not to hesitate in calling 911 when there's an overdose.

CAITRIN HOULIHAN: I've been arrested, in jail, and a lot in between. I’ve overdosed multiple times and family and friends have called 911 so the first responders could revive me, but I've also had people run away because they were scared. Call 911 saves lives and gives them the opportunity to get into treatment and on a path to
recovery. Over three years ago I got into treatment and I stuck with it ever since.

GOVERNOR BAKER This law, this 911 Good Samaritan Law, will reinforce to bystanders and first responders alike, that the most important step to take when someone is having an overdose is to save their life and that someone shouldn't face legal consequences for taking that step.

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