WHEREAS, recent data from the Centers Disease Control (CDC) concludes that over 30,000 Americans died from opioid drug overdose, and over 15,000 Americans died from prescription opioid overdose in 2016.

WHEREAS, Medicare and Medicaid programs pay a significantly large share of expenses for opioid pain relievers.

WHEREAS, medical cannabis research has demonstrated effective management of chronic pain resulting from injury, cancer, HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis, nerve damage, and other ailments.

WHEREAS, medical cannabis could be an effective tool in combating the national opioid crisis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the National Conference of State Legislature (NCSL) urges the federal government to consider medical cannabis policy when considering policies to expand access to affordable medicine and grant states the authority to explore medical cannabis polices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, NCSL asks the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and Drug Enforcement Administration, the Food and Drug Administration and other relevant federal agencies to work closely with state and local officials, healthcare providers and industry representatives in developing programs that could use medical cannabis in addition to other preventative measures to combat the opioid crisis.