



**State Representative Jay Dean**  
**House District 7**

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**Dean Combats Opioid Abuse with Filing of Legislative Package**

**Austin, TX** - This morning, Representative Jay Dean announced the filing of a legislative package aimed at combating the scourge of opioid abuse. The bills are the product of the numerous interim hearings of the Select Committee on Opioids and Substance Abuse, on which Dean served.

"It's no secret that we have a crisis across Texas, and especially in East Texas, of opioid addiction," said Dean. "It's tearing families apart, harming our workforce, funding criminal activity, and killing our neighbors and children. While I respect that these drugs serve a medical purpose, we need to ensure patients are empowered to make wise decisions and that bad actors are shut down. From the dozens of hours of expert testimony we heard in committee, it is extremely clear that no single person or industry is responsible for the epidemic, and by the same token, I believe we all need to play a part in the solution."

The legislative package comprised of five bills employs three strategies. The first strategy, which includes HB 2086 and HB 2088, aims to increase the availability and visibility of controlled substance take-back locations. Such locations are scarce, especially in areas of low population density. HB 2086 would require pharmacies that dispense controlled substances to also provide a regular, secure, and anonymous method of disposal. HB 2088 would require that along with filling a prescription, pharmacies must also provide written notice of the nearest take-back location.

On these bills, Dean stated: "If someone has leftover pills in their medicine cabinet, they're either going to hold on to them, flush them down the toilet, sell them, or use them outside of treatment. The current number of take-back locations is woefully inadequate. I applaud the pharmacies that have taken it upon themselves to address this shortage, but we need to be doing more. One national take-back day is not going to help the struggling addict who is tempted every time they brush their teeth and see pills staring back at them. What they need is the option of safe disposal."

The second strategy, targets criminals. HB 2087 would require e-prescription of schedule 2 narcotics, thus avoiding the possibility of forged prescriptions. Included in this strategy is a bill--still awaiting a number designation--that targets fly-by-night pharmacies. The bill would give discretion to The Board of Pharmacy, which does not currently have investigative powers to pursue pharmacy licensees who frequently change locations or falsely list "front" locations, to revoke licenses for bad actors.



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Lastly, HB 2085 would give patients the option of signing a non-opioid directive. Just as a patient may sign a directive declining resuscitation, with the passage of HB 2085, a patient would now have the power to decline opioids before such a prescription were issued.

In closing, Dean added: "It's as simple as this: 80% of heroin addicts first misused prescription opioids. 70% of abused medications are taken from household medicine cabinets. 20% of Texas High School students admit to having taken prescription drugs without a prescription. If you've missed it somehow, we have an issue. I think our Attorney General has done a great job in highlighting this issue through the [doseofreality.texas.gov](http://doseofreality.texas.gov) website and other avenues under his jurisdiction. And I agree with his assessment: "drug take back saves lives." But it's also clear the Legislature needs to step up to the plate, elevate the issue, and provide a legislative solution. I plan on doing exactly that."

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*Representative Jay Dean, House District 7 (HD 7) is a conservative member of the Texas House of Representatives serving his second term. HD 7 is comprised of Gregg Co. and Upshur Co. Rep. Dean, along with his wife Pokie, resides in Longview, TX, where they raised their three daughters and helped found their church, St. Matthews.*