



Senate Finance Committee

March 26, 2024

House Bill 1230 – Public Health – Tianeptine Consumer Protection Act

Support

NCADD-Maryland supports House Bill 1230 as amended in the House. This bill would prohibit the sale of products containing tianeptine.

Tianeptine is an antidepressant medication that is not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Clinical effects of tianeptine misuse and withdrawal can mimic opioid toxicity and withdrawal.¹ The FDA has issued a warning urging consumers not to purchase or use tianeptine products due to serious risks including seizures, loss of consciousness and death.²

While not FDA-approved for use in the United States, this product is readily purchased online or at gas stations, and informally referred to as “gas station heroin.”³ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warn that consumers should avoid all products containing tianeptine, including those claiming to treat an ailment or disorder.⁴

Because this is a dangerous substance that is completely unapproved and unregulated, NCADD-Maryland urges a favorable report on HB 1230.

¹ Characteristics of Tianeptine Exposures Reported to the National Poison Data System — United States, 2000–2017

Weekly / August 3, 2018 / 67(30);815–818; Tharwat El Zahran, MD1,2; Joshua Schier, MD1,2; Emily Glidden, MPH1; Stephanie Kieszak, MPH1; Royal Law, PhD1; Edward Bottei, MD3; Cynthia Aaron, MD4; Andrew King, MD4; Arthur Chang, MD1 (VIEW AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS)

² Food and Drug Administration. Tianeptine products linked to serious harms, overdose, death. Silver Spring, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration; 2022. <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/tianeptine-products-linked-serious-harm-overdoses-death>

³ Clark D. ‘Gas station heroin’ is addictive and, in some cases, deadly. Chicago, IL: NewsNation; 2023. <https://www.newsnationnow.com/health/gas-station-heroin-tianeptine-addictive-withdrawl>

⁴ Christopher J. Counts, MD1,2; Anthony V. Spadaro, MD1,2; Trevor A. Cerbini, MD1,2; Alex J. Krotulski3; Howard A. Greller, MD1,2; Lewis S. Nelson, MD1,2; Bruce E. Ruck, PharmD2; Diane P. Calello, MD1,2 (VIEW AUTHOR AFFILIATIONS)