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April 14th, 2023

RE: Annual Lamentation Service for Victims of the Overdose Crisis

To the Clergy and Congregants of Christ Church Cathedral

Today, at the Lamentation Service for Victims of the Overdose Crisis, we take the time to remember and mourn the people we've lost and the families that have been forever altered. Losing a child, parent, sibling, or cherished friend to an avoidable tragedy isn't something we would wish for someone else, but this is the reality for far too many. Working to help those who are still with us and to support those left behind after such a loss is a priority for me as an MLA representing the area. Addiction is a public health issue and it's one that can't be solved in a vacuum. This crisis is not something that one person can solve – these problems demand that all of us step up, to come together, and to be there for each other.

We need to honour the memory of those we've lost. I believe the best way to do that is through action – through being there for each other, offering support, pushing back against stigma, creating more treatment options, and expanding our mental healthcare.

This is a day to reflect on how we can create a safer world, where tomorrow is better than it is today.

Sincerely,

Brenda Bailey, MLA for Vancouver-False Creek