



**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Middlesex Sheriff's Office**  
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**For Immediate Release**  
June 22, 2015

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**Statement of Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian on the release of  
the Governor's Opioid Working Group Recommendations**

“I want to thank Governor Baker, Attorney General Healey and all the members of the Opioid Working Group for their thorough report unveiled today. At a time when 80 percent of those in the custody of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office self-identify with an addiction issue, continuity of health care is a critical link to recovery and reducing crime. One priority included in the Governor's Action Plan is the suspension – rather than termination – of MassHealth benefits when someone is incarcerated. This technical change will eliminate red tape while closing gaps in coverage for individuals after their release from prison. Also included in the recommendations is partnerships between correctional institutions and community health centers, something happening now at the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, which establishes relationships between inmates and the medical team who will help to continue with their recovery. At the Middlesex House of Correction and Jail, our medical unit will perform a projected 2,300 medical detoxes this year. Continuity of health care isn't just a public health issue – it's a matter of public safety.”