

September 17, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, S-221
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
The Capitol, H-232
United States Congress
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
The Capitol, H-204
United States Congress
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders McConnell, Schumer, Ryan and Pelosi:

The undersigned organizations thank you for your leadership and the considerable time and resources this Congress has dedicated to addressing the opioid overdose epidemic.

We are writing to respectfully request that you ensure Section 3003 of *The SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act* (HR 6) as passed by the House, which would expand access to evidence-based Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), is included in the final conferenced legislation addressing the opioid overdose epidemic

Section 3003 is based on HR 3692, the *Addiction Treatment Access Improvement Act*. The provision would 1) eliminate the sunset date for nurse practitioners (NPs) and physician assistants' (PAs) prescribing authority for buprenorphine, 2) temporarily expand the definition of "qualifying practitioner" to include nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse midwives, and 3) permit a waivered-practitioner to start immediately treating 100 patients at a time with buprenorphine (in lieu of the initial 30 patient cap) if the practitioner has board certification in addiction medicine or addiction psychiatry or if the practitioner provides medications for the treatment of addiction involving opioid use in a qualified practice setting.

Unfortunately, particularly in rural states, there is a shortage of qualified clinicians who can treat the ever-increasing number of patients with opioid use disorder. If enacted, Section 3003 of HR 6 would be a key step in addressing this barrier by increasing access to evidence-based addiction treatment provided by trained physicians and clinicians. There is no magic bullet for tackling this epidemic, but we must do everything we can to ensure that as many Americans as possible can receive evidence-based treatment as a key step in reducing the number of overdoses and deaths.

The undersigned organizations ask you to ensure the inclusion of Section 3003 to expand access to evidence-based medication assisted treatment in the final legislative package addressing the opioid overdose epidemic. We thank you again for your leadership in addressing this national crisis.

Sincerely,

1. Academy of Integrative Pain Management
2. Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (AMSN)
3. American Academy of Nursing
4. American Academy of PAs
5. American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

6. American Association of Colleges of Nursing
7. American Association of Nurse Practitioners
8. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
9. American College of Medical Toxicology
10. American College of Nurse-Midwives
11. American Foundation for Suicide Prevention/SPAN USA
12. American Nurses Association
13. American Psychiatric Nurses Association
14. American Society of Addiction Medicine
15. amfAR
16. A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)
17. Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Health
18. Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
19. Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
20. CADA of Northwest Louisiana
21. Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice
22. Center for Women's Health and Human Rights
23. Clinical Social Work Association
24. Connecticut Certification Board
25. Drug Policy Alliance
26. Entertainment Industries Council (EIC)
27. Faces and Voices of Recovery
28. Facing Addiction with NCADD
29. FED UP! Coalition
30. Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse
31. Friends Research Institute, Inc.
32. Global Alliance on Behavioral Health and Social Justice
33. Harm Reduction Coalition
34. HIV Alliance (Oregon)
35. Illinois Association for Behavioral Health
36. Mental Health America
37. Missouri Department of Mental Health
38. National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD)
39. National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
40. National Association for Rural Mental Health
41. National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
42. National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
43. National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)
44. National Association of Social Workers
45. National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
46. National Council for Behavioral Health
47. National Eating Disorders Association
48. National Health Care for the Homeless Council
49. National Health Law Program
50. National League for Nursing
51. National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (NNCC)
52. National Safety Council

53. Next Harm Reduction, Inc.
54. Northwood Health Systems
55. Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
56. Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing
57. Project Lazarus
58. Shatterproof
59. Smart Approaches to Marijuana Action (SAM Action)
60. Society of Pediatric Nurses
61. South Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition
62. Steve Rummeler Hope Network
63. The Kennedy Forum
64. Treatment Communities of America
65. University of Nebraska Medical Center
66. Utah Naloxone, University of Utah Department of Pediatrics
67. Why Not Prosper
68. WV Free
69. Young People in Recovery

CC:

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Orrin Hatch
The Honorable Ron Wyden
The Honorable Greg Walden
The Honorable Frank Pallone
The Honorable Michael Burgess
The Honorable Gene Green
The Honorable Kevin Brady
The Honorable Richard Neal
The Honorable Peter Roskam
The Honorable Sander Levin