

November 28, 2016

United States Congress
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

To the Members of the United States Senate and the United States House of Representatives:

As the 114th Congress comes to a close and opportunities are emerging to introduce new funding, the undersigned organizations respectfully urge you to consider the urgent and growing need to effectively address the opioid epidemic in our country.

Significant funding is needed to ensure evidence-based approaches to prevention, treatment, and recovery strategies are available to the many Americans who so desperately need them. The wide-ranging and devastating impact of this true public health emergency on individuals, families, and our communities demonstrates the pressing need for this critical funding.

Public awareness of the opioid crisis has grown significantly in recent months as its effects continue to be felt by more and more of our nation's residents. Importantly, this greater awareness also highlights shifting attitudes in how we as a society view addiction and substance use disorders, treating them as the diseases they are rather than as moral failings or weaknesses. As noted in the U.S. Surgeon General's recent report on addiction¹, adopting an evidence-based approach to prevention, treatment, and recovery is essential in addressing substance use disorders, as it would be with other health conditions.

We therefore urge you to provide the maximum possible allocation to fund not only the grant programs designated under the bipartisan Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) passed earlier this year, but to also substantially increase funding for much-needed prevention and treatment efforts for opioid misuse and related disorders.

As legislators, you have heard the personal experiences of your constituents whose lives have been affected by the opioid epidemic. You have shared these experiences in committee hearings, on the floor of the House of Representatives and the Senate, in town halls in your communities, and in countless other meetings, and you have taken action to help improve programs that support efforts to address this public health crisis. We deeply appreciate your work, and as providers we strongly urge Congress to ensure that existing and newly-created programs have the necessary resources to meet the needs of patients and families struggling with opioid use disorders.

Thank you again for your bipartisan work to date to help fight this disease. With this final opportunity before the end of the 114th Congress, we encourage you to provide the maximum possible funding for prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts, and we stand ready to support you in this vital effort.

Sincerely,

American Osteopathic Association
AANS/CNS Joint Section on Pain
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Osteopathy
American Academy of Pain Medicine

¹ <https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/surgeon-generals-report.pdf>

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Internists
American College of Osteopathic Neurologists and Psychiatrists
American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians
American College of Physicians
American College of Rheumatology
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association (ADEA)
American Gastroenterological Association
American Medical Association
American Nurses Association
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine
American Osteopathic College of Anesthesiologists
American Osteopathic College of Radiology
American Pharmacists Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians
Arizona Osteopathic Medical Association
Arkansas Osteopathic Medical Association
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Association of Recovery Community Organizations
California Medical Association
College on Problems of Drug Dependence
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Connecticut Osteopathic Medical Society
Delaware Chapter of the National Alliance for Medication Assisted Recovery
Faces & Voices of Recovery
Florida Osteopathic Medical Association
Friends Research Institute
Harm Reduction Coalition
Idaho Osteopathic Physicians Association
Indiana Osteopathic Association
Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association
Kansas Association of Osteopathic Medicine
Kentucky Osteopathic Medical Association
Louisiana Osteopathic Medical Association
Maine Osteopathic Association
Massachusetts Medical Society
Massachusetts Osteopathic Society
Michigan Chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians

Michigan Osteopathic Association
Minnesota Osteopathic Medical Society
Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
Missouri Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
National Alliance for Medication Assisted Recovery
National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Spine Specialists
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
New Mexico Osteopathic Medical Association
New York State Osteopathic Medical Society
North American Spine Society
Ohio Osteopathic Association
Ohio State Medical Association
Ohio State Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
Oklahoma Osteopathic Association
Oregon Medical Association
Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons of California
Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons of Oregon
Recovery Communities of North Carolina
Rhode Island Society of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons
South Dakota Osteopathic Association
South Florida Chapter of the National Alliance for Medication Assisted Recovery
Texas Osteopathic Medical Association
The Methadone Advocacy Group of Indiana
Treatment Communities of America
Washington Osteopathic Medical Association
West Virginia Osteopathic Medical Association
Wisconsin Association of Osteopathic Physician & Surgeons