

February 24, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

We write in support of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, introduced by Senators Whitehouse, Portman, Ayotte, Klobuchar, Coons, and Kirk, and Congressmen Sensenbrenner and Scott, S. 524/H.R. 953, which will make important advancements to effectively address the growing epidemic of drug abuse in the United States.

Heroin use and misuse of prescription painkillers is having a devastating effect on public health and safety in communities across the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdoses now surpass automobile accidents as the leading cause of injury-related death for Americans between the ages of 25 and 64. 129 Americans die as a result of overdose in this country every day.

We know that addiction is a treatable disease, but we also know that only about 10 percent of those who need treatment are receiving it. Discoveries in the science of addiction have led to advances in drug abuse treatment that can help people stop abusing drugs and resume their productive lives.

We know from researchers, the law enforcement community, and treatment providers that the most effective way to address the challenges posed is to initiate a comprehensive response to the twin epidemics of opioid and heroin addiction that includes ***prevention, law enforcement strategies, preventing overdose deaths, expansion of evidence-based treatment, and support for those in, or seeking, recovery.***

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015 will:

- Expand prevention and educational efforts—particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations—to prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and to promote treatment and recovery.
- Expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives.
- Expand resources to identify and treat incarcerated individuals suffering from addiction disorders promptly by collaborating with criminal justice stakeholders and by providing evidence-based treatment.
- Expand disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of our children and adolescents.

- Launch an evidence-based opioid and heroin treatment and interventions program. While we have services and medications that can help treat addiction, there is a critical need to get the training and resources necessary to expand use of evidence-based treatment services and medications to assist in treatment and recovery throughout the country.
- Strengthen prescription drug monitoring programs to help states monitor and track prescription drug diversion and to help at-risk individuals access services.

Only through a comprehensive approach, such as that included in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015, that leverages evidence-based law enforcement and health care services, including treatment, can we stop and reverse current trends. The goal is to implement these programs to test and demonstrate strategies without creating new programs and including the required offsets. The cost of the bill is kept low at approximately 65 million per year with no impact on mandatory spending.

We are grateful for your leadership and urge all Members of Congress to support The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015.

Sincerely,

1. ACACIA NETWORK, Inc.
2. Alkermes, Inc.
3. American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
4. American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
5. American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence
6. American Correctional Association
7. American Psychological Association
8. American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)
9. Arizona's Children Association
10. Arizona Council of Human Service Providers
11. Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
12. Association for Behavioral Healthcare
13. Association for Behavioral Healthcare of Massachusetts
14. Association of Recovery Schools
15. Association of Recovery in Higher Education
16. Association to Benefit Children
17. Behavioral Enhancement and Substance Abuse Medicine Treatment,
B.E.S.T.PLLC – Dear Park, NY
18. Big Cities Health Coalition
19. California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals (CCAPP)
20. Center for Behavioral Health Services
21. Central Florida Behavioral Health Network, Inc.
22. Clinical Social Work Association
23. The Coalition of Behavioral Health Agencies, Inc.
24. CODAC—Rhode Island
25. College on Problems of Drug Dependence (CPDD)

26. Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council
27. Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
28. Community Behavioral Health Association of MD
29. Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois
30. Community Catalyst
31. Comprehensive Connections
32. DEA Educational Foundation
33. Division on Substance Abuse at the Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons
34. Dorchester County Health Department, Maryland
35. Employee Assistance Professionals Association – Long Island Chapter
36. Faces and Voices of Recovery
37. Family Services of Westchester
38. Father Martin's Ashley
39. FedCURE
40. Michael Fine, Director of Public Health, Rhode Island
41. Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association
42. Florida Council for Community Mental Health
43. Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse
44. Friends of Recovery New York
45. Georgia Association of Community Service Boards
46. Getting Out and Staying Out
47. Goodwill Industries of Greater New York and Northern New Jersey, Inc.
48. The Guidance Center of Westchester, Inc.
49. Harm Reduction Coalition
50. Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation
51. Hope Network
52. Horizon Health Services and Horizon Village, Inc.
53. Housing Works
54. Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association (IADDA)
55. Indivior
56. International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)
57. International CURE
58. Iowa Behavioral Health Association
59. Joel K. Johnson, President and CEO, Human Resources Development Institute, Inc.
60. Kings Park in the kNOw Community Coalition – Kings Park, NY
61. Legal Action Center
62. The Long Island Center for Recovery – Hampton Bays, NY
63. Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
64. Major County Sheriffs Association
65. The Maine Association of Substance Abuse Services
66. The McShin Foundation
67. Mental Health America
68. Mental Health Association of Westchester County
69. Michigan CURE
70. Mike Matarazzo

71. Minnesota Recovery Connection
72. Missouri Coalition for Community Behavioral Healthcare
73. Missouri Recovery Network
74. NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
75. National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD)
76. National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
77. National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA)
78. National Association of County and City Health Officials
79. National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors
80. National Association of State Alcohol and Substance Abuse Director
81. National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers
82. National Athletic Trainers' Association
83. National Council for Behavioral Health
84. National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD)
85. National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence of New Jersey (NCADD-NJ)
86. National Criminal Justice Association
87. National District Attorneys Association
88. National Health Care for the Homeless Council
89. National Safety Council
90. NADAP
91. New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
92. New York Therapeutic Communities Inc. Stay'n Out Programs
93. North Shore Youth Council – Rocky Point, NY
94. Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association
95. Charles P. O'Brien, MD, Department of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania
96. The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers
97. Osborne Association
98. Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
99. Patricia Sams, Vice-President Stone County Alliance for Recovery
100. Pederson-Krag
101. Peninsula Counseling Center
102. Phoenix House
103. Raising Heroin Awareness
104. Recover Wyoming
105. RI International
106. Samaritan Village
107. Senator Richard Sears, Vermont
108. Sky Light Center
109. Spanish Speaking Elderly Council – RAICES
110. Dr. Eric Strain, Behavioral Pharmacology Research Unit, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
111. StepUP Program, Augsburg College
112. The Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Council of Rhode Island
113. Suffolk County Bureau of Public Health Nursing

114. Susan P Murrell, Substance Use Clinical Coordinator, Health Choice Integrated Care, LLC
115. TASC Illinois
116. Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug & other Addiction Services
117. Transitions Mental Health Services
118. Treatment Communities of America
119. The Treatment Research Institute
120. Trust for America's Health
121. United We C.A.N. Change Addiction Now - National
122. Upper Manhattan Mental Health Center
123. Debra L. Wentz, Ph.D., CEO of New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.
124. WestCare Foundation
125. Yes Community Counseling - Levittown, NY
126. Young People in Recovery – National
127. Young People in Recovery – Albany, NY
128. Young People in Recovery – Austin, TX
129. Young People in Recovery – Madison, WI
130. Youth Evaluation and Treatment Centers (YETC)