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As the Addiction and Overdose Crisis Accelerates, Over 250 Organizations Call on the Senate to Advance and Expand the SUPPORT Act

The joint letter spearheaded by ASAM and the Overdose Prevention Initiative urges Senate Finance and HELP Committee leaders to enact bipartisan policies that expand access to evidence-based addiction treatment

Rockville, MD – Today, more than 250 organizations from across the nation and the entire healthcare continuum have sent a [letter](#) to bipartisan leaders of the Senate Finance and Health, Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committees, urging them to bring forward the reauthorization of the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention That Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act (SUPPORT Act; P.L. 115-271) as soon as possible. The landmark legislation that passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in 2018 lapsed on September 30 amidst the nation’s accelerating addiction and overdose crisis.

The letter, which was spearheaded by the [American Society of Addiction Medication \(ASAM\)](#) and the [Overdose Prevention Initiative](#) at the Global Health Advocacy Incubator, also calls on the Senate to advance bipartisan policies that increase access to medications for treating opioid use disorder.

“The SUPPORT Act must not only be reauthorized, but also expanded to include bipartisan policies that increase access to medications for treatment of opioid use disorder. By expanding the SUPPORT Act reauthorization, Congress can remove barriers to lifesaving treatment for Americans at greatest risk of fatal overdose, including individuals who are incarcerated and those exposed to fentanyl. Failing to do so forfeits one of the few opportunities your committees have this Congress to pass new and necessary approaches to the overdose crisis,” the groups wrote.

In addition to ASAM and the Overdose Prevention Initiative, the letter was signed by more than 250 other organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Clinical Pharmacy, American College of Emergency Physicians, American Psychological Association Services, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association for Behavioral Healthcare, National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, National Council for Mental Wellbeing, National Harm Reduction Coalition, National Safety Council, Partnership to End Addiction, Shatterproof, The Kennedy Forum, and Young People in Recovery.

“Reauthorizing the SUPPORT Act and advancing bipartisan solutions to expand access to evidence-based addiction treatment is critical to saving lives,” said Brian Hurley, MD, MBA, FAPA, DFASAM, president of ASAM. “We remain in the worst overdose crisis in the history of our country. Research shows that people with addiction who receive evidence-based care are less likely to die from overdose than those who remain untreated. If we are to reverse the trend of overdose deaths, Congress must support new pathways that increase access to treatment for people with addiction, including during incarceration and with medication as clinically appropriate.”

“In 2018, the original SUPPORT Act passed with overwhelming bipartisan support amid a worsening overdose crisis. Five years later, we are still losing too many family members and friends to preventable overdoses,” says Libby Jones, Program Director at the Overdose Prevention Initiative. “A reauthorized SUPPORT Act will deliver critical funding and resources to community-based organizations that are on the frontlines of the overdose crisis. Reauthorization also creates an opportunity for Congress to advance far-reaching policy change that supports federal efforts to end the overdose crisis. We need a bold response to this urgent crisis, and this is the first step.”

There is an urgent need for Congress to advance policies to increase Americans’ access to evidence-based addiction treatment. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that [more than 112,000 drug overdose deaths](#) occurred in the U.S. in the 12-month period ending May 2023—an all-time high.

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About the American Society of Addiction Medicine

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), founded in 1954, is a professional medical society representing over 7,000 physicians, clinicians, and associated professionals in the field of addiction medicine. ASAM is dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment, educating physicians and the public, supporting research and prevention, and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addiction. For more information, visit www.ASAM.org.

About the Overdose Prevention Initiative

Established in 2021, the Overdose Prevention Initiative at the Global Health Advocacy Incubator advances policy solutions that save lives and end the U.S. overdose crisis. The Initiative is dedicated to reducing inequities and disparities in substance use disorder care and expanding access to harm reduction services and substance use disorder treatment. The Overdose Prevention Initiative is funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and is a partnership between the Global Health Advocacy Incubator and the Tobacco Free Kids Action Fund.