



# Louisiana Society of Addiction Medicine

*A Chapter of American Society of Addiction Medicine*

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May 14, 2024

The Honorable Dustin Miller  
Chair  
House Committee on Health and Welfare  
900 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

## Re: LASAM's Support for SB 190, Legislation Providing for Medicaid Reimbursement Rate Increases

Dear Chair Miller:

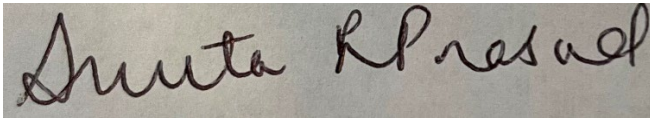
On behalf of the Louisiana Society of Addiction Medicine (LASAM), the medical specialty society representing physicians and other clinicians in Louisiana who specialize in the prevention and treatment of addiction, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important topic. **We write today to express our strong support for SB 190.** This legislation would raise Medicaid rates for physician services, including treatment for substance use disorder (SUD). SB 190 is sorely needed legislation which would put our Medicaid rates on more competitive footing with the rest of the country and expand access to care for SUD.

As a state that has been hit hard by the addiction and overdose crisis,<sup>1</sup> SB 190 would help provide better health outcomes for patients. In our field of addiction medicine, one of the largest challenges that we face are policy barriers impeding access to evidence-based care. Concerns about financial viability and low reimbursement rates dissuade many physicians from offering addiction care. Indeed, low Medicaid reimbursement rates are commonly cited by addiction specialists as major concerns impeding access to SUD treatment.<sup>2 3</sup> Further, Medicaid policy is especially important in the context of SUD treatment because Medicaid is the largest payer for behavioral health services including services for SUD.<sup>4</sup> As such, SB 190 will help our state deliver higher quality care for those in need and improve our response to the overdose epidemic.

Ultimately, SB 190 would improve our state's healthcare system. Louisiana ranks far below the national average for base Medicaid payments.<sup>5</sup> A such, SB 190 would enable more physicians to be better compensated and deliver higher quality care to more patients. **For these reasons, we urge members of the committee to favorably report this legislation and support its advancement.**

LASAM greatly appreciates your consideration of our perspective. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [smita.prasad@gmail.com](mailto:smita.prasad@gmail.com) if you have any questions or concerns. We are happy to assist and consult.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Smita Prasad" in a cursive, flowing script.

Smita Prasad, MD, MBA, MPH, FASAM  
President, Louisiana Society of Addiction Medicine

CC: The Honorable Stephanie H. Berault  
The Honorable Rhonda Gaye Butler  
The Honorable Emily Chenevert  
The Honorable Raymond J. Crews  
The Honorable Kellee Hennessy Dickerson  
The Honorable Michael Charles Echols  
The Honorable Peter F. Egan, Sr.  
The Honorable Adrian Fisher  
The Honorable Jason Hughes  
The Honorable Steven Jackson  
The Honorable Wayne McMahan  
The Honorable Brach Jerad Myers  
The Honorable Larry Selders  
The Honorable Joseph A. Stagni  
The Honorable Christopher Turner

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. (2022). *Drug Overdose Mortality by State*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug\\_poisoning\\_mortality/drug\\_poisoning.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug_poisoning_mortality/drug_poisoning.htm)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2020). *Medicaid: States' Changes to Payment Rates for Substance Use Disorder Services*. GAO-20-260. <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-20-260>

<sup>3</sup> Henderson, J. (2021). *As Overdoses Rise, Opioid Treatment Providers Struggle to Get Paid*. Medical News. [https://www.medpagetoday.com/special-reports/exclusives/93220?xid=nl\\_mpt\\_DHE\\_2021-06-23&eun=g1266987d0&utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Daily+Headlines+Top+Cat+HeC++2021-06-23&utm\\_term=NL\\_Daily\\_DHE\\_dual-gmail-definition](https://www.medpagetoday.com/special-reports/exclusives/93220?xid=nl_mpt_DHE_2021-06-23&eun=g1266987d0&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Daily+Headlines+Top+Cat+HeC++2021-06-23&utm_term=NL_Daily_DHE_dual-gmail-definition)

<sup>4</sup> Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission. (2015). *Behavioral Health in the Medicaid Program—People, Use, and Expenditures*. MACPAC. [https://www.macpac.gov/publication/behavioral-health-in-the-medicaid-program%E2%80%95people-use-and-expenditures/#:~:text=Behavioral%20Health%20in%20the%20Medicaid%20Program%E2%80%95People%2C%20Use%2C%20and%20Expenditures,-Download%20Publication%20\(pdf&text=Medicaid%20is%20the%20single%20largest,behavioral%20health%20spending%20in%202009](https://www.macpac.gov/publication/behavioral-health-in-the-medicaid-program%E2%80%95people-use-and-expenditures/#:~:text=Behavioral%20Health%20in%20the%20Medicaid%20Program%E2%80%95People%2C%20Use%2C%20and%20Expenditures,-Download%20Publication%20(pdf&text=Medicaid%20is%20the%20single%20largest,behavioral%20health%20spending%20in%202009)

<sup>5</sup> Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission. (2023). *Estimates of Medicaid Nursing Facility Payments Relative to Costs*. MACPAC. <https://www.macpac.gov/publication/estimates-of-medicaid-nursing-facility-payments-relative-to-costs/> Appendix A. State-Specific Results TABLE A-1. Estimated Medicaid Base Payments Per Day Relative to Costs, by State, 2019