

June 26, 2019

The Honorable Richard Neal  
Chairman  
House Ways & Means Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady  
Ranking Member  
House Ways & Means Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1139 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Neal and Ranking Member Brady:

On behalf of the organizations below, we write to express our support for the Opioid Workforce Act of 2019 (H.R. 3414). This thoughtful, bipartisan legislation would provide Medicare support for an additional 1,000 graduate medical education (GME) positions over five years in hospitals that have, or are in the process of establishing, accredited residency programs in addiction medicine, addiction psychiatry, or pain medicine. We greatly appreciate the Committee's commitment to advancing policies that would strengthen the health care workforce serving on the front lines of the nation's opioid epidemic.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in 2016 approximately 21 million people needed treatment for a substance abuse disorder, however only 11% of those received any treatment at all. Part of the reason for this disparity is a shortage of physicians trained in addiction medicine, addiction psychiatry, or pain management. The lack of physicians trained in these specialties reflects the nation's larger physician shortages. Funding new, targeted residency positions will strengthen the health care workforce and help mitigate the effects of the overall physician shortage.

The Opioid Workforce Act of 2019 is a targeted and important step that Congress must take to help ensure a robust physician workforce that can deliver high-quality care to those suffering from substance abuse disorders.

We encourage all members of the Committee to support this bipartisan bill.

Sincerely,

AIDS United  
Alabama Society of Addiction Medicine  
Alaska Society of Addiction Medicine  
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine  
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry  
American Academy of Pain Medicine  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
American College of Academic Addiction Medicine  
American College of Physicians

American Medical Group Association  
American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Society of Addiction Medicine  
America's Essential Hospitals  
Arizona Society of Addiction Medicine  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
California Hospital Association  
California Society of Addiction Medicine  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Connecticut Society of Addiction Medicine  
Federation of American Hospitals  
Greater New York Hospital Association  
Healthcare Association of New York State  
Healthcare Leadership Council  
Illinois Health and Hospital Association  
Maryland-DC Society of Addiction Medicine  
Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association  
Massachusetts Society of Addiction Medicine  
Medical Group Management Association  
Michigan Society of Addiction Medicine  
Midwest Society of Addiction Medicine (Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska)  
National Council for Behavioral Health  
Nevada Society of Addiction Medicine  
New Jersey Society of Addiction Medicine  
Northwest Society of Addiction Medicine (Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota)  
Ohio Society of Addiction Medicine  
Oklahoma Society of Addiction Medicine  
Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing  
Pennsylvania Society of Addiction Medicine  
Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing  
Rhode Island Society of Addiction Medicine  
SMART Recovery  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
South Carolina Society of Addiction Medicine  
Student Coalition on Addiction  
Texas Society of Addiction Medicine  
The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania  
Utah Society of Addiction Medicine  
Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine  
West Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine  
Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine  
Young People in Recovery

CC: Reps. Brad Schneider, Susan Brooks, Annie Kuster, and Elise Stefanik