

January 9, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

As the undersigned organizations, we write to express our strong support for the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act (S. 3393), sponsored by Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Bill Cassidy (R-LA). As organizations that represent the major groups across all disciplines working on a comprehensive response to address the substance use disorder and overdose crisis facing our country, we deeply understand the critical need for S. 3393. This important piece of legislation will reauthorize and expand upon crucial programs and grants in the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Act, passed by Congress in 2018 to combat the opioid epidemic. S. 3393 will have a vital impact nationwide by providing states, localities, and community-based organizations like ours with essential resources to address this crisis.

We share Congress's dedication and commitment to formulating evidence-based solutions to address the addiction crisis, which tragically led to nearly 110,000 drug overdose deaths in 2022 alone.¹ According to a recent report from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), almost 49 million Americans aged 12 and older had a substance use disorder in 2022, which is equivalent to more than 1 in 6 people. Findings also show that 25% of Americans aged 12 years old or older, or 70 million people, used illicit substances in 2022—an increase of approximately 15% from 2021. Additionally, in 2022, among people aged 12 or older, 8.9 million people misused opioids, and 6.1 million people had an opioid use disorder.² These alarming statistics reflect the serious and harmful impacts to individuals, families, and communities across the country, and it is imperative that our communities receive continued support in combating the ongoing opioid crisis.

Key programs and resources that S. 3393 would provide include:

- Programs to support the monitoring and education of infections commonly associated with illicit drug use;
- Prescription drug monitoring programs;
- Overdose prevention programs;
- Support programs for families impacted by fetal alcohol spectrum disorder;
- Residential treatment recovery services for pregnant and postpartum women with substance use disorder;
- Professional training programs for the mental health workforce;
- Trauma support and mental health services in schools;

¹ Ahmad, F. B., Cisewski, J.A., Rossen, L. M., & Sutton P. (2023). Provisional drug overdose death counts. National Center for Health Statistics. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2023). *Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health* (HHS Publication No. PEP23-07-01-006, NSDUH Series H-58). Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2022-nsduh-annual-national-report>

- A national peer-run training and technical assistance center for addiction recovery support;
- Programs for first responders to reverse overdoses;
- Substance use disorder prevention and recovery programs for youth;
- Comprehensive centers that provide a full spectrum of treatment and recovery support services for individuals with opioid use disorder;
- Greater opportunities for people in recovery to reenter the workforce;
- A loan repayment program for the substance use disorder treatment workforce; and
- Clarifying that state opioid response grant program funds can be used toward overdose prevention products, such as test strips, that detect the presence of substances.

We are grateful for Congress’s tireless work to equip and empower Americans with the resources and supports needed to build healthier, safer, and stronger communities, while removing barriers to life-saving treatment and overdose reversal medications. We thank you for your leadership, and we respectfully urge you to advance the SUPPORT Reauthorization Act (S. 3393) to continue addressing the substance use disorder and overdose epidemic. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our groups if any other information would be helpful.

Sincerely,

Addiction Policy Forum
 Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services, Inc.
 American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
 American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence
 American College of Medical Toxicology
 Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
 A Stepping Stone to Success
 Behavioral Health Foundation
 Benton Franklin Recovery Coalition
 Beyond the Pod
 Boss Mode Recovery
 Civil Citation Network
 Community in Crisis
 Connecticut Valley Addiction Recovery, Inc.
 Correctional Leaders Association
 Council of State Governments Justice Center
 Faces & Voices of Recovery
 Harm Reduction Research Lab, University of Arizona College of Medicine-Tucson
 Hope House Treatment Centers
 Huntington, WV QRT (Quick Response Team)
 Milken Institute
 Montgomery County Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, Inc.
 NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
 National Association for Children of Addiction
 National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
 National League of Cities
 New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.
 New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare

Northern New England Society of Addiction Medicine
Operation PAR, Inc.
Oregon Council For Behavioral Health
Pathway Healthcare
RWJBarnabas Health
Serenity Now Nar-Anon
Southwest Recovery Alliance
TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities)
Today I Matter, Inc.
Treatment Communities of America
WestCare Foundation
Voices of Hope, Inc.
Youth Connections/Montana Alliance of Prevention

Cc:

The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chair, Senate Committee on Health, Energy, Labor, and Pensions
The Honorable Bill Cassidy, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health, Energy, Labor, and Pensions