



March 19, 2018

The Honorable Joe Donnelly  
United States Senate  
720 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maggie Hassan  
United States Senate  
330 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: S.2524, Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Act of 2018**

Dear Senators Donnelly, Murkowski, and Hassan,

The undersigned mental health, substance use disorder, and health care professional organizations in the Coalition to Stop Opioid Overdose are writing today to express our support for your bill, the Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Act of 2018.

The Coalition to Stop Opioid Overdose (CSOO) is a coalition of diverse organizations representing health care and social service professionals and advocates united around common policy goals that will lead to meaningful and comprehensive policies to reduce opioid overdose deaths through prevention, treatment and recovery support services.

The morbidity and mortality statistics related to addiction, and in particular opioid addiction, are astounding. From 1999 to 2016, there have been over 200,000 overdose deaths related to prescription opioids making it the current leading cause of accidental death in the U.S.<sup>i,ii</sup>

To turn the tide of the opioid epidemic in the U.S., we need to build a more robust treatment workforce. There are simply too few clinicians with the requisite knowledge to meet the needs of the estimated 20.1 million Americans suffering from untreated substance use disorders. To make a meaningful and sustainable impact on the current opioid overdose epidemic, it is imperative that our country make strategic investments to incentivize clinicians to work in programs and practices that specialize in the treatment of substance use disorder and addiction.

The Substance Use Disorder Loan Repayment Act would create a more robust treatment workforce by helping participants who pursue full-time substance use disorder treatment jobs in high-need geographic areas repay their student loans, and the undersigned members of CSOO are proud to support it. Thank you for your leadership in introducing this important legislation. We look forward to working with you to secure its passage.

COALITION TO  
**STOP OPIOID**  
**OVERDOSE**

Sincerely,

Academy of Integrative Pain Management  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society of Addiction Medicine  
A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment and Healing)  
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness  
CADA of Northwest Louisiana  
California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professional  
Connecticut Certification Board  
HIV Alliance  
IC & RC  
Illinois Association of Behavioral Health  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Council for Behavioral Health  
Shatterproof  
The Kennedy Forum  
Treatment Communities of America  
Young People in Recovery

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<sup>i</sup> Frenk SM, Porter KS, Paulozzi LJ. Prescription opioid analgesic use among adults: United States, 1999–2012. NCHS data brief, no 189. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> Hedegaard H, Warner M, Miniño AM. Drug overdose deaths in the United States, 1999–2016. NCHS Data Brief, no 294. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2017.