

Tireless Advocate on Addiction Issues Leaves Leadership Void

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For Immediate Release

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ALEXANDRIA, Va. - A prominent supporter of Americans in recovery from alcohol and drug addiction has announced that he will step down, leaving a leadership void in Congress.

Eight term [Representative Patrick Kennedy \(D-R.I.\)](#) has announced that he will not seek re-election in the election later this year. This means that just two years after the historic passage of the Wellstone-Domenici Parity Act, the five principle sponsors of the law will all be out of Congress: Sen. Ted Kennedy (deceased), Sen. Pete Domenici (did not run in 2008), Sen. Chris Dodd (will not run in 2010), Rep. Ramstad (did not run in 2008) and now Rep. Kennedy.

NAADAC President [Patricia M. Greer, LCDC AAC](#) , issued this statement on Rep. Kennedy's retirement:

It was with thoughtful dismay that I learned of Rep. Kennedy's announcement not to run for re-election this past week. His invaluable contributions towards the parity effort had a direct impact not only upon millions of Americans, but also upon the members of NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, and the client population that we serve. His remarks have been inspirational to our membership, and to our many allies around the country who address substance abuse, mental health and other related issues. It has been an honor to meet and speak with him regarding the initiatives in the treatment of substance abuse at a few of our events, and I fervently hope that his resignation from Congress does not mean that your focus on speaking for those who still suffer will cease.

There are few in the House of Representatives who have any passion for making treatment affordable and available. Rep. Kennedy's efforts in the legislation for health have been exciting and meaningful. We are grateful for the caucus that he initiated *[in partnership with Rep. Ramstad (R-MN)]* and his remarks about dependency on the floor of the House. Rep. Kennedy's honest assessment of his own struggles in the public eye have provided windows into recovery for all who are concerned about America's substance abuse problems. So many families have benefitted either directly or indirectly from Rep. Kennedy's willingness to be frank about the nature of the his and the nation's problems, and his forthright support of the best solutions. The need for a continuous clamor for recovery from those who suffer from addiction, as well as for those in need of the option to recover, will not create an impact until we have all come together and demand a genuine solution to the need that exists.

We will miss Rep. Kennedy's leadership and we look forward to his future contributions and successes.

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NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals, is the largest organization for addiction-focused health care professionals. Founded in 1974, NAADAC is committed to the professional development of individuals who treat and prevent addiction. NAADAC also works to improve the provision of treatment services through education and advocacy programs. "We help people recover their lives."