

Joins With National Lawmakers to Endorse Legislation

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NAADAC is united with federal lawmakers who hope to make it harder for people to abuse addictive painkillers.

NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, joined with Congressional Representatives Bill Keating (D – Mass.), Mary Bono Mack (R – Calif.) and Nick Rahall II (D - W.V.), General Arthur T. Dean, Chairman and CEO of the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America and Michael Barnes, Executive Director of the Center for Lawful Access and Abuse Deterrence to outline a new federal approach to the problem of non-medical use of painkillers.

Reps. Bill Keating (D-MA) and Mary Bono Mack (R-CA) announced unprecedented federal legislation addressing tamper resistant formulations for commonly abused painkillers. The Stop the Tampering of Prescription Pills (STOPP) Act is sponsored by Rep. Keating, Ranking Member of the House Homeland Security's Oversight, Investigations and Management Subcommittee, who partnered with Rep. Bono Mack, a leading advocate in the area of substance abuse prevention. Rep. Bono Mack chairs the Congressional Caucus on Prescription Drug Abuse and the Youth Drug Caucus, of which Rep. Keating is a member.

[Read the Proposed Legislation](#)

NAADAC Executive Director, [Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, NCAC II, CCDC III, SAP](#) , said the proposed legislation "is a step closer to the complete picture of drug misuse and abuse

intervention and that may start the road to recovery for many individuals. Counseling for drug misuse and addiction is a crucial step on the path to recovery and addiction professionals are a key part of assisting the motivation to change."

In a prepared statement, Reps. Keating and Bono Mack spoke about the legislation.

"Prescription drug abuse is the fastest growing drug problem in America – one that does not discriminate by region, socioeconomic status or age. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have identified prescription drug abuse as an epidemic with more than 15,500 Americans die each year from prescription painkillers. An important piece in preventing new users from abusing painkillers is the development of tamper-resistant formulas for opiates. For this reason, we are furthering tamper-resistant mechanisms to prevent overdoses and decrease the illegal use of prescription painkillers."

The announcement came before the two congressional members were scheduled to meet with [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) Commissioner Margaret Hamburg later in the day to consult on the best way to move the legislation forward.

According to the [2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#) commissioned by the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health services Administration](#), non-medical pain reliever use is second only to marijuana, with two million or more new non-medical pain reliever users each year since 2002, including over 500,000 who initiated their use without ever having tried another illicit drug. ([citation](#))

These trends have a real impact. As Rep. Bono Mack testified before the Senate Caucus on International narcotics Control, she said, "It's time to move this story from the obituary page to the front page, where it belongs."

Rep. Bono Mack, who chairs the Congressional Caucus on Prescription Drug Abuse and the Youth Drug Caucus, became one of the leading voices on the issue in the House after her own son went into rehab after abusing pills and other drugs.

Full Statement by Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, NCAC II, CCDC III, SAP:

Good morning. My name is Cynthia Moreno Tuohy and I am the Executive Director of NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals, which represents the professional interests of more than 75,000 addiction counselors, educators and other addiction-focused health care professionals in the United States, Canada and abroad. The members of NAADAC specialize in addiction prevention, intervention, treatment, recovery support and education. An important part of the health care continuum, NAADAC members and its 44 affiliates work to create healthier individuals, families and communities.

I want to thank Representatives Keating and Bono Mack for sponsoring the Stop the Tampering of Prescription Pills, or STOPP Act, which will create a pathway to incentivize and eventually mandate the creation of physical and pharmacological tamper resistant formulations for extended releases painkillers. NAADC strongly supports this legislation.

I have been asked to comment briefly on this issue.

The technology of disrupting the process behind the ability to snort or inject pain killer medication is a large step in disrupting the addictive processes in the reward center of the brain chemistry from getting high and seeking further use. This technology has the potential to change the behavior of drug seeking individuals to use pain killers and thereby de-valuing the street demand of the opiate pain killers which will reduce the number of a person's negative and destructive behaviors when they do misuse and abuse pain killers. The formula also has the potential to reduce the number of people overdosing and dying, thereby saving lives and family suffering. It is a step closer to the complete picture of drug misuse and abuse intervention and that may start the road to recovery for many individuals. More education of the public and health care professionals is critical. Currently, we have several helpful medications available for alcohol and drug addiction that facilitate stronger recovery efforts.

Research to further explore medication deterrents and medication recovery support is essential to create healthier individuals, families and communities. Without this research we will not be as effective in discovering new pathways to change the brain. Counseling for drug misuse and addiction is necessary in the overall intervention of people's lives and addiction professionals are the key to assist in creating the motivation to change. It does take a whole community to support intervention, treatment and recovery from opiate misuse and abuse. Please join us in this step forward. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning.

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