December 11, 2023

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
568 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2433 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jeffries:

As the undersigned organizations, we write to express our strong support for the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act (H.R. 4531), sponsored by Representatives Brett Guthrie (R-KY) and Ann Kuster (D-NH). 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 are acutely aware of the critical need for H.R. 4531. 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 (H.R. 6), passed by Congress in 2018 to combat the opioid epidemic. H.R. 4531 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 H.R. 4531 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;
- Residential treatment recovery services for pregnant and postpartum women with substance use disorder;
- A national peer-run training and technical assistance center for addiction recovery support.

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● Programs for first responders and members of other key community sectors to reverse overdoses;
● Technical assistance and support to recovery community organizations and peer support networks;
● Comprehensive centers that provide a full spectrum of treatment and recovery support services for individuals with substance use disorder;
● Greater opportunities for people in recovery to reenter the workforce;
● Allowing states to use certain grants toward fentanyl or xylazine test strips where legal;
● A loan repayment program for the substance use disorder treatment workforce;
● Reauthorizing the Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program to recruit and educate students on the behavioral and mental health fields;
● Extending the requirement for state Medicaid plans to provide coverage for Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD), which have shown to reduce opioid use, overdose deaths, criminal activity, infectious disease transmission, and other adverse health and behavioral consequences; and
● Requiring any reference to opioid overdose reversal agents in Department of Health and Human Services grant programs to refer to all opioid overdose reversal agents approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

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 (H.R. 4531) 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,

National
Addiction Policy Forum
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry
American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence
American College of Medical Toxicology
American Probation and Parole Association
Appro-Rx
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Behavioral Health Foundation
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
Correctional Leaders Association
Faces & Voices of Recovery
Milken Institute
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
National Association for Children of Addiction
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National League of Cities
RxGuardian Inc.
Treatment Communities of America
WestCare

**State/Local**
AGUAS Latino Counseling Services, LLC, *Virginia*
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services, Inc., *Pennsylvania*
A Stepping Stone to Success Sober Living, *Florida*
Benton Franklin Recovery Coalition, *Washington*
Beyond the Pod, *Indiana*
Boss Mode Recovery, *Indiana*
Center for Health and Natural Healing, *Arizona*
Chesapeake Integrated Behavioral Healthcare, *Virginia*
City Church Huntington, *West Virginia*
Civil Citation Network, *Florida*
Clean Slate Centers, *Pennsylvania*
Command Destinations, *Massachusetts*
Community in Crisis, *New Jersey*
Confidant Health, *Connecticut, Florida, New Hampshire, Texas, Virginia*
Connecticut Valley Addiction Recovery Inc., *Connecticut*
Drug Policy Research and Advocacy Board, *Arizona*
Harm Reduction Research Lab, University of Arizona College of Medicine-Tucson, *Arizona*
Hope House Treatment Centers, *Maryland*
Huntington, WV QRT (Quick Response Team), *West Virginia*
Indiana Recovery Advocacy Project, *Indiana*
Montgomery County Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, Inc., *Maryland*
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc., *New Jersey*
New York State Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, *New York*
Northern New England Society of Addiction Medicine, *Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont*
Operation PAR, Inc., *Florida*
Oregon Council for Behavioral Health, *Oregon*
Pathway Healthcare, *Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Texas*
Serenity Now, *Florida*
Southwest Recovery Alliance, *Arizona*
Success Care, *Arizona*
TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities), *Illinois*
The Skook Recovers, *Pennsylvania*
Today I Matter, Inc., *Connecticut*
Voices of Hope, Inc., *Maryland*
West Valley Health Equity, *Arizona*
Youth Connections, *Montana*

Cc:
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Chair, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
The Honorable Brett Guthrie, Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
The Honorable Ann Kuster, Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce