

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2018

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC
20500

Dear President Trump,

Our state has been hit as hard as any by this crisis but our people and communities are resilient and there is much you can learn from our efforts to save lives and stop this epidemic. As you will learn, the highly effective Safe Stations program allows those suffering from substance use disorder to seek help without fear of reprisal. Creating pathways to treatment, like Safe Stations, while expanding capacity for detoxification and recovery is critical to solving this problem.

In addition to Safe Stations, Granite Staters are spearheading the following creative solutions to provide treatment and expand recovery efforts that can serve as a model for communities across the country:

- Harbor Homes: Operates an innovative integrated service model that provides housing, healthcare, mental health and substance use treatment, and counseling for jobs and other benefits. The integrated model means that Harbor Homes is able to bridge across disciplines to improve the effectiveness of treatment for 1,200 low-income individuals and families in New Hampshire.
- Moms in Recovery: This innovative program offers screening, interventions, extended outpatient treatment and group intensive outpatient treatment for pregnant and postpartum women with substance use disorders. The explosion of neonatal abstinence syndrome is a heartbreaking consequence of the opioid epidemic and New Hampshire is one of the hardest hit states for the prevalence of NAS. The program makes substance use disorder treatment and recovery services more accessible for mothers who have to care for their children and families while trying to care for themselves.
- White River Junction VA Medical Center Pain Management: Dr. Julie Franklin, a physician at the White River Junction facility, developed a program that was intended to reduce opioid prescription rates among veterans at the facility. Previous reports indicated that veterans were twice as likely to have opioids prescribed to them as non-veterans; consequently, overdose rates for veterans were nearly double that of non-veterans. Dr. Franklin's program led to a nearly 50 percent reduction in prescription opioids among participants. Dr. Franklin

utilized complementary and alternative medicines and therapies (CAM), including acupuncture, yoga, and other mental health counseling. By addressing comorbidities that could increase the experience of pain, Dr. Franklin saw marked success.

- NH Recovery Academy: Providing peer-support to people in recovery has shown to be a successful model that complements treatment and other interventions. Recovery coaches like those at the Safe Harbor Recovery Center provide guidance on health, wellness, and support for people seeking employment. These organizations also provide recreational sporting and athletic activities which improve a person's quality of life and heightens one's sense of self-worth.

But to truly solve this crisis, those on the frontlines need the resources to improve and expand the effective work they are already doing.

Congress has already approved \$1 billion over two years as part of the 21st Century Cures Act and reached an agreement to spend an additional \$6 billion for opioid relief in Fiscal Years 2018 and 2019. This funding was driven by the Bipartisan Heroin Task will continue to make an important difference but more is needed. Existing funding to address the crisis does not adequately reflect the scope of this epidemic and the needs of New Hampshire and the country. We support legislation that will provide an additional \$25 billion over five years and ask for leadership from you and your Administration to provide the support for an appropriate level of funding to address this crisis.

Similarly, the Commission on Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis that you created last year produced an array of important policy recommendations that your Administration should implement. Included in these recommendations are improvements to prescribing practices, Medicaid reimbursements, data gathering and surveillance, interdiction and enforcement efforts, and others. We appreciated the work of your Commission but are concerned that there has been little action in response to the Commission's findings and recommendations.

Addressing the opioid crisis must be about results and not just rhetoric. We cannot arrest our way out of this crisis but we can provide the support our communities need to respond effectively and save lives. We hope your experience in New Hampshire underscores this fact and we welcome the opportunity to continue to share more lessons learned by the Granite State community on effective recovery efforts that could be used by the federal government nationwide.

Sincerely,



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress