

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 21, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders McConnell, Schumer, Ryan, and Pelosi,

We write to express support for Sec. 3003 of the House-passed Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Act. We encourage you to include this provision in the final legislative package you are currently negotiating.

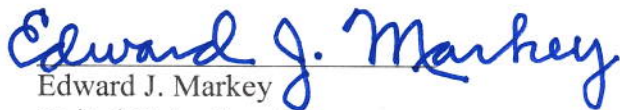
Sec. 3003 would expand access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) by enabling qualified nurse practitioners and physician assistants to permanently prescribe buprenorphine, and would expand this authority, for five years, to three other advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) specialties: certified nurse midwives, clinical nurse specialists, and certified-registered nurse anesthetists. This policy is based upon the Addiction Treatment Access and Improvement Act (H.R. 3692 and S. 2317), which enjoys bipartisan support in both chambers.

This provision not only builds upon prior Congressional efforts through the *Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016* (P.L. 114-198) to expand access to MAT, but collectively encompass a vital component for effectively and immediately responding to the nation's opioid crisis. Considering any opioid legislation without this provision to expand MAT would be a missed opportunity to reaffirm Congress's commitment to treatment.


This provision is critically important to those with opioid use disorders living in rural or medically underserved areas who may otherwise not have access to this life-saving therapy. Empowering providers like nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and APRNs to prescribe MAT is a vital tool for effectively expanding the availability of treatment. For these communities, addressing existing barriers to treatment is crucial for saving lives and otherwise addressing the heroin and opioid epidemic.

We appreciate your efforts to address the opioid crisis impacting families and communities across the country. We believe expanding access to MAT through Sec. 3003 – as well as Sec. 1408 of the Senate-passed Opioid Crisis Response Act, which increases the physician treatment cap to 275 patients – is an indispensable component of a comprehensive response. Thank you for your attention to this important public health issue.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator


Rand Paul
United States Senator


Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator


Susan Collins
United States Senator


Paul Tonko
Member of Congress


Ben Ray Lujan
Member of Congress


Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress


Tom MacArthur
Member of Congress


Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

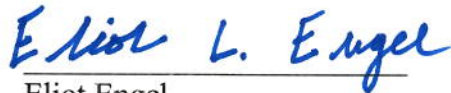

Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



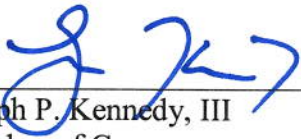
Leonard Lance
Member of Congress



Eliot Engel
Member of Congress



John Faso
Member of Congress



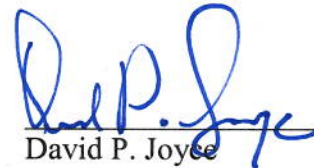
Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress



Mike Coffman
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress