Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 12, 2016

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker and Madam Leader,

Heroin and prescription opioid misuse is devastating communities nationwide. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), currently more than 129 Americans die every day as a result of drug overdoses and the epidemic is worsening. This crisis is exacerbated by the increased use of a deadlier and more potent opioid known as fentanyl, which is driving the majority of fatal overdoses. At the same time, the lack of resources, treatment options, research funding, and drug education impedes efforts to resolve the crisis.

Earlier this year, Congress acted with overwhelming support to give law enforcement, healthcare providers, caregivers, and educators more resources to better do their jobs. Passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) shows Congress' bipartisan commitment to resolve this epidemic by providing grants to communities to fight substance use disorder.

Additionally, the House Appropriations Committee reflected many of the advances developed in CARA that address needed heroin and opioid funding changes in several of the FY17 subcommittee bills reported out of Committee. However, these funding adjustments will not be reflected in a continuing resolution, whether short or long-term, hamstringing our national response for Americans suffering and dying from heroin and opioid addiction. Congress' inability to finish the appropriations process threatens to leave embattled communities without the funding and assistance they need to save lives.

Recognizing American lives hang in the balance, we request consideration for appropriation anomalies in negotiations of a continuing resolution that reflect the advances made in the FY17 subcommittee bills, which address opioid enforcement, prevention, treatment, research, and recovery efforts. Funding as appropriated in FY16 simply does not reflect the current intent of Congress or come close to addressing the life-saving needs of our communities.

Through the comprehensive and targeted approach reflected in the FY17 bills, which leverage evidence-based law enforcement initiatives, treatment, and support for recovery, we can reverse the skyrocketing number of heroin and prescription opioid overdoses and

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deaths. We hope you will prioritize this request and grant these life-saving anomalies to ensure timely and adequate help for our communities that daily suffer the burdens of prescription opioid and heroin abuse.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

Frank C. Guinta
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

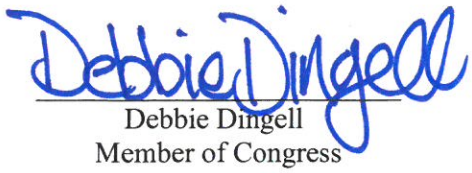
Steve Knight
Member of Congress

Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

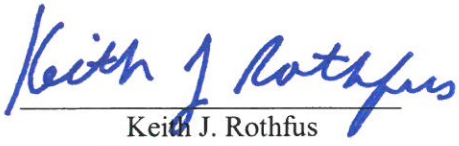
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress

Richard Hanna
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Keith J. Rothfus
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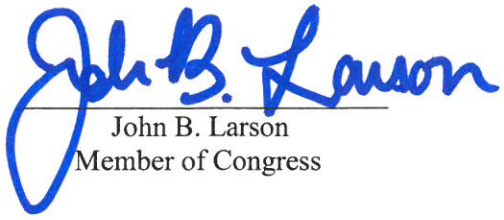
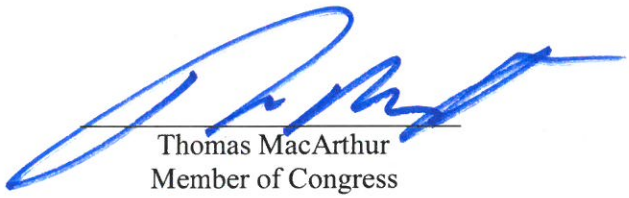


John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Thomas MacArthur
Member of Congress

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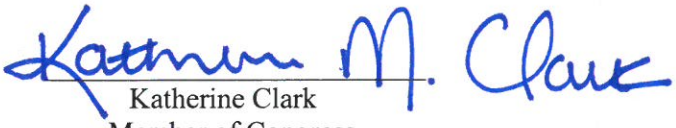
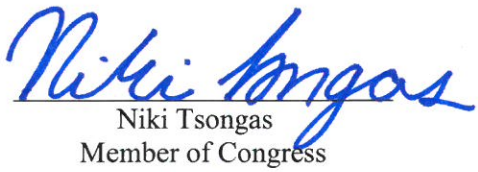


Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



Niki Tsongas
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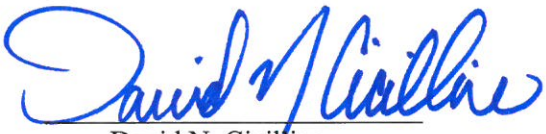

David N. Cicilline
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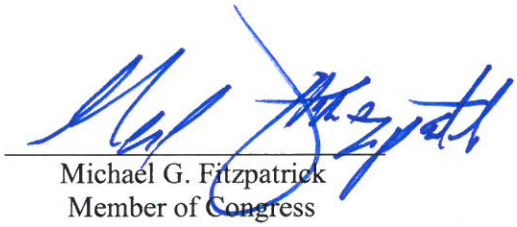

Michael G. Fitzpatrick
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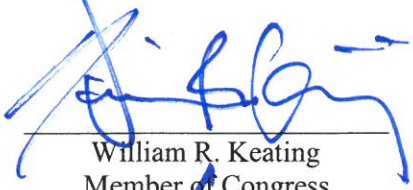

William R. Keating
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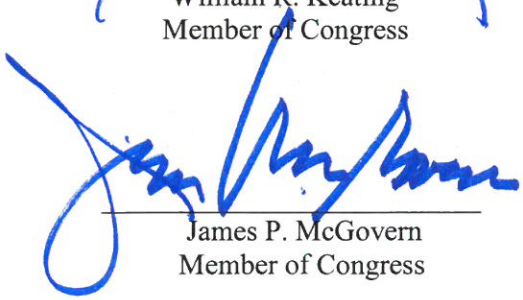
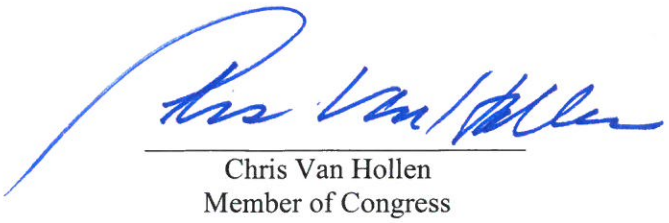
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



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