

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor
Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Burr:

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the addiction epidemic in our country and contributed to a nearly 30 percent increase in the number of overdose deaths in the past year. In the wake of increased isolation coupled with treatment and support system disruptions, the number of people suffering and dying from overdoses soared to more than 93,000, the highest annual total on record.¹ Now, more than ever, those who are struggling with addiction need our help. We urge the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to take up and pass S. 485, *The Family Support Services for Addiction Act*. This bipartisan bill, which has already passed the House of Representatives, would provide \$25 million in grant funding over five years for family support services—training, education and peer-to-peer support—that are necessary components of effective addiction treatment and recovery.

Substance Use Disorders create many victims; family support services help to effectively aid them all by meeting families where they are, which is in their own communities. Evidence shows that when families are involved in their loved one's treatment and recovery, outcomes improve for everyone involved.^{[i],[ii]} For the person struggling with SUD, family engagement helps increase their commitment to treatment and strengthens lasting support systems for long-term recovery.^{[iii],[iv]} For family members, support services provide key training and education while alleviating many of the adversities—stress, guilt, shame, anger, fear, anxiety, loss, grief, and isolation—that come from caring for someone experiencing a Substance Use Disorder.^[v] Additionally, preventing and reducing the current medical, environmental, emotional, and psychological disorders experienced by family members can help reduce future risks.

Despite the importance of family support services, financial resources have been exceptionally constrained and federal support has been largely absent. By providing \$25 million in grant funding to national and local family support service programs, the *Family Support Services for Addiction Act* fills the gaping hole in federal support. Through this act, thousands of families will be empowered with the knowledge and resources to support themselves and their loved ones.

At this critical time, we urge you to take up and pass S. 485, *Family Support Services for Addiction Act*.

Sincerely,

180 Interventions

Action Coalition of Johnson County, TN

Addiction Awareness-what can we do to save a life?

Advocates for Opioid Recovery

American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

American Association on Health and Disability

American Counseling Association

American Mental Health Counselors Association

Arise& Flourish,Inc

Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness

atTAcK addiction

Bfyne complex

BigBee Energy Coaching

Boys & Girls Clubs of America

California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals

Celebrate Recovery at Northland

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

Child & Family Services of Newport County

Citizens Attacking Addiction

Community Development Partnerships, Inc.

Community in Crisis

Covenant Community, Inc.

Creative Recover

Donation with Love Foundation

Donegal Substance Abuse Alliance

Embrace ND Inc

Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. (EIC)

Faces and Voices of Recovery

Faith Over Fear Outreach
Families Against Narcotics Blue Water Chapter
Families Against Narcotics Inc
Families of Addicts
Families USA
Family Medical Center
Family Medical Center of Michigan
Family Support Services for Addiction
Florida Mental Health Advocacy Coalition
Food Safety Training Solutions
Girls Inc.
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Glorious Recovery Foundation
Greater Philadelphia Association for Recovery Education
Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation
Jkfoundation
Kohnlinq, Inc. DBA Kohn-linq Foundation, Inc
Lakeshore Foundation
Learn to Cope
Lost Voices of Fentanyl
Manhasset Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse
Mercer Council
Mental Health & Addiction Resources Board of Lorain County, Ohio
Ministry of Health & Wellness: Substance Abuse Advisory Council
Mississippi Recovery Advocacy Project
MoCo Recovery Group
MomsLettingCo.com
MPOWRD for Leadership and Prevention

NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals

NACBHDD

NARMH

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers

National Association for Children of Addiction

National Association for Children's Behavioral Health

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Recreation and Parks Association

Network of Jewish Human Services Agencies

New Roots INC

Newtown Parent Connection

New York Association of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers

Parent 2 Parent Strategies

Parents Helping Parents, Inc.

Partnership to End Addiction

Powerful teachers and parents

Prevention Resources

PRO-A

Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)

Pyramid Life Center

Reach for Tomorrow Ohio

Ryan's Opioid Pandemic Coalition & Advocacy

SHE RECOVERS Foundation

SMART Recovery

Sonoran Prevention Works

Southern Recovery Advocacy

SOZO recovery

SpiritWorks Foundation
Strength In Peers, Inc
Stronger than addiction
Support After Addiction Death
Take Back America Campaign
The Brown Family Foundation
The Chris Atwood Foundation
The Family Resource Center of North MS
The Kennedy Forum
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The Purpose of Recovery Inc
The Voices Project
Thrive DC
Thriving United
Turning Point NV
Unicoi County Prevention Coalition
Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness
Ware Regional Recovery Center
Washtenaw Recovery Advocacy Project
Well Being Trust
Young People In Recovery

¹Ahmad FB, Rossen LM, Sutton P. Provisional drug overdose death counts. National Center for Health Statistics. 2021. Designed by LM Rossen, A Lipphardt, FB Ahmad, JM Keralis, and Y Chong: National Center for Health Statistics. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm> Accessed: July 15, 2021.

^[i] Lander L, Howsare J, Byrne M. The impact of substance use disorders on families and children: from theory to practice. *Soc Work Public Health*. 2013;28(3-4):194-205. doi:10.1080/19371918.2013.759005

^[ii] Copello AG, Templeton L, Velleman R. Family interventions for drug and alcohol misuse: is there a best practice?. *Curr Opin Psychiatry*. 2006;19(3):271-276. doi:10.1097/01.yco.0000218597.31184.41

^[iii] McDonagh, Debbie and Reddy, John (2015) Drug & alcohol family support needs analysis report. Galway: Western Region Drugs Task Force.

^[iv] Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Recovery and Recovery Support. At: <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery> Accessed: May 21, 2020.

^[v] Ibid.