



April 11, 2018

The Honorable Greg Walden  
Chairman  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2185 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
237 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Burgess  
Chairman  
Health Subcommittee  
House Committee on Energy  
and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gene Green  
Ranking Member  
Health Subcommittee  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2322A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Support for H.R. 4005 – Medicaid Reentry Act**

Dear Chairmen Walden and Burgess and Ranking Members Pallone and Green,

The undersigned mental health, substance use disorder, and health care professional organizations in the Coalition to Stop Opioid Overdose are writing today to express support for Representative Paul Tonko's (NY-20) Medicaid Reentry Act (H.R. 4005). This legislation will be considered during the Health Subcommittee's hearing entitled, "Combating the Opioid Crisis: Improving the Ability of Medicare and Medicaid to Provide Care For Patients."

The Coalition to Stop Opioid Overdose (CSOO) is a coalition of diverse organizations representing health care and social service professionals and advocates united around common policy goals that will lead to meaningful and comprehensive policies to reduce opioid overdose deaths through prevention, treatment and recovery support services.

The risk of opioid-related overdose death dramatically increases in the first days and weeks after an individual with untreated opioid use disorder is released from jail or prison.<sup>i</sup> Providing treatment access during incarceration and warm handoffs to community-based care upon release can reduce this risk and help save lives. Passing legislation to facilitate pre-release treatment and connections to community-based care for individuals released from the criminal justice system should be a key part of a comprehensive Congressional response to the ongoing opioid addiction and overdose death epidemic.

The Medicaid Reentry Act addresses this need directly by granting states limited new flexibility to restart benefits for Medicaid-eligible incarcerated individuals 30 days prior to release. With this flexibility, states would be able to facilitate access to medication treatment for inmates prior to release and better coordinate care with community providers, allowing for uninterrupted,

COALITION TO  
**STOP OPIOID**  
**OVERDOSE**

evidence-based treatment for these individuals during a transition when they are at heightened risk of overdose and death. This legislation does not expand Medicaid eligibility.

The undersigned members of the Coalition to Stop Opioid Overdose are pleased to support H.R. 4005, the Medicaid Reentry Act, and strongly recommend it be included in any final opioid-related legislation package sent to the House floor.

Sincerely,

A New PATH

Academy of Integrative Pain Management

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

American Society of Addiction Medicine

Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness

HIV Alliance

National Council for Behavioral Health

National Safety Council

Shatterproof

The Kennedy Forum

Treatment Communities of America

Young People in Recovery

CC:

The Honorable Paul Tonko

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<sup>i</sup> Binswanger IA, Blatchford PJ, Mueller SR, and Stern MF. Mortality After Prison Release: Opioid Overdose and Other Causes of Death, Risk Factors, and Time Trends From 1999 to 2009. *Ann Intern Med* 2013 Nov 5; 159(9): 592–600.