

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 31, 2017

The Honorable Donald Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Trump:

As individuals, families and communities across the country continue to be devastated by the opioid epidemic, we write to urge you to take action immediately to award the \$1 billion in opioid treatment resources that we provided as part of the 21st Century Cures Act last year. With 91 Americans dying every day from an opioid overdose, the time for action is now.

The opioid epidemic is getting worse. In 2015, opioids killed more than 33,000 people, more than any year on record. An estimated 2.5 million Americans have an opioid use disorder, and opioid overdoses have quadrupled since 1999. Death rates continue to rise and have increased sharply for synthetics, like illicitly-manufactured fentanyl, and heroin. These trends must be reversed.

To help respond, Congress included \$1 billion in the 21st Century Cures Act over two years for States to expand opioid use disorder treatment. The law requires that the resources be allocated based on need. It has been nearly four months since Congress made this funding available and in the face of an urgent public health crisis, we urge you to get these critical resources in the hands of States now. Congress provided this funding so that individuals and families would be able to get the treatment they need. Every day that passes without these resources being allocated is a missed opportunity for someone to embark on recovery.

We also strongly believe that none of the funding made available through the 21st Century Cures Act should be used to offset cuts to other opioid or substance use disorder funding in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Given the nearly 18 percent reduction to HHS in your Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Blueprint, we are concerned that other existing funding to opioid and substance use disorder prevention, treatment and recovery services at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the National Institute for Drug Abuse could be reduced. We oppose any such efforts and urge you to fully fund current opioid and substance use disorder prevention, treatment and recovery efforts in addition to the 21st Century Cures funding.

As we continue to look for any and all opportunities to combat the opioid epidemic, we urge you to provide States with the treatment resources made available through the 21st Century Cures Act, and to work with Congress to continue to combat the opioid epidemic.



Robert P. Casey, Jr.

Sincerely,




Sherrod Brown



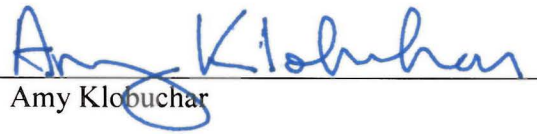
Margaret Wood Hassan



Kirsten Gillibrand



Cory A. Booker



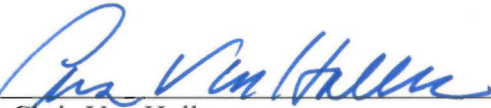
Amy Klobuchar



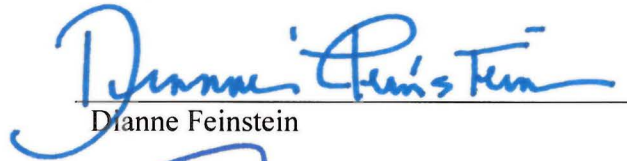
Tammy Baldwin



Thomas R. Carper



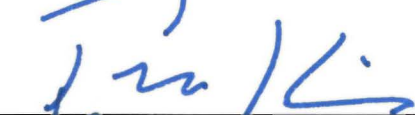
Chris Van Hollen



Dianne Feinstein



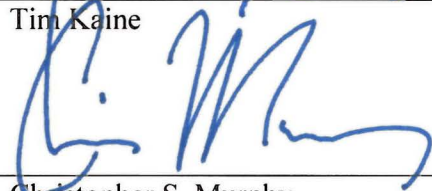
Jack Reed



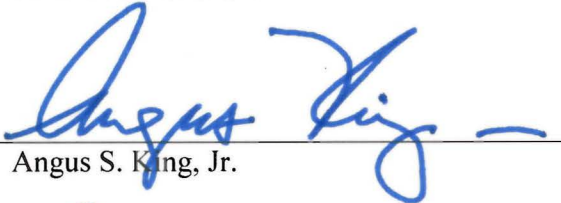
Tim Kaine




Richard Blumenthal



Christopher S. Murphy



Angus S. King, Jr.



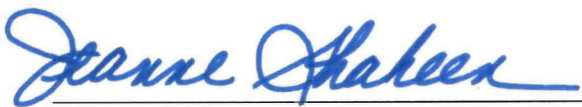
Robert Menendez



Debbie Stabenow



Ron Wyden



Jeanne Shaheen



Maria Cantwell