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**Media Contact:**

Emily Brown

[emily@eandvgroup.com](mailto:emily@eandvgroup.com)

(860) 944-4028

## **Voices for Non-Opioid Choices Applauds Reintroduction of Landmark Opioid Addiction Prevention Bill**

*The NOPAIN Act works to prevent opioid addiction through increased access to non-opioid pain management approaches for acute pain*

**WASHINGTON, D.C., MAY 17, 2021** – Voices for Non-Opioid Choices, a nonpartisan coalition dedicated to preventing opioid addiction before it starts, applauds U.S. Representatives Terri Sewell (D-Ala.), David McKinley (R-W.V.), Ann Kuster (D-N.H.) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pa.) for reintroducing the Non-Opioids Prevent Addiction in the Nation (“NOPAIN”) Act. This landmark legislation, a first-of-its-kind effort to prevent opioid addiction in the United States, would expand access to and utilization of non-opioid pain management approaches for acute pain management by promoting parity in the way these alternatives are reimbursed by Medicare.

Companion legislation was introduced on March 4, 2021 in the Senate by U.S. Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.V.), Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.), Joe Manchin (D-W.V.) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio).

“The opioid epidemic has been largely overshadowed by the current COVID-19 pandemic,” said Chris Fox, executive director of Voices for Non-Opioid Choices, which [led a letter to congressional leadership urging inclusion of the NOPAIN Act last year](#). “Recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data reports more than [87,000 people died of a drug overdose in the 12 months ending in September 2020](#), the highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded in a 12-month period. We urgently need prevention-based policy solutions like the ones proposed by Representatives Sewell, McKinley, Kuster and Fitzpatrick to truly curb the skyrocketing rates of opioid overdose deaths in the United States.”

The legislation enjoyed broad, bipartisan support in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, with more than 60 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives. The legislation was also widely supported across the health care community including among some of the nation’s leading provider groups, such as

the [American Medical Association](#), the [American College of Surgeons](#) and [the American Society of Anesthesiologists](#).

“The continued opioid epidemic in the United States has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is beyond time Congress passes meaningful legislation to comprehensively address this critical issue,” said Representative Sewell. “The NOPAIN Act would reduce disincentives for practitioners to provide patients enrolled in Medicare with non-opioid pain management, giving doctors the ability to prescribe treatments that are best-suited for their patients’ needs.”

“Last year, over 80,000 people died from drug overdoses,” said Representative McKinley. “Many of these deaths could have been prevented if doctors prescribed non-opioid options to treat and manage pain in the first place. This bill will eliminate disincentives for non-opioid pain management and will reduce the number of Americans who get hooked on addictive opioid painkillers.”

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to intensify the opioid crisis, passage of the NOPAIN Act is critical to reducing record-breaking overdose deaths in the United States and prevent addiction from taking root in communities across the country.

“It is paramount policymakers address this public health crisis now,” concluded Fox. “We lose 150 Americans every day to an opioid overdose, and making matters worse, we have spent [\\$2.5 trillion on this crisis just since 2015](#) – more than the combined cost of caring for Americans with cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes. We cannot afford to wait any longer.”

For more information, please visit the Voices website at [www.nonopioidchoices.org](http://www.nonopioidchoices.org).

### **About Voices for Non-Opioid Choices**

Voices for Non-Opioid Choices is a nonpartisan coalition dedicated to preventing opioid addiction before it starts by increasing patient access to non-opioid therapies and approaches to manage acute pain. To learn more, visit [www.nonopioidchoices.org](http://www.nonopioidchoices.org) or follow @nonopioidchoice on Twitter.

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