



Dear Members of the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress,

On behalf of the patients, providers, families, and health professionals our 84 organizations represent, we urge you to pass the Alternatives to Prevent Addiction in the Nation (Alternatives to PAIN) Act (H.R. 1227/S. 475) to prevent unnecessary exposure to opioids and ensure access to the wide array of FDA-approved, safe, and effective non-opioid pain management approaches for America's seniors.

Congress has already taken an important step in expanding access to non-opioid treatments through the Non-Opioids Prevent Addiction in the Nation (NOPAIN) Act, which was signed into law as part of the 2023 omnibus spending agreement and took effect January 1, 2025. This law covers outpatient surgical procedures covered by Medicare Part B and, as a result, would do little to prevent health insurance plans from steering seniors with a Medicare Part D plan towards lowest cost care options, which are often generic prescription opioids.

Our country's seniors are not immune to the worsening opioid epidemic, with overdose deaths among seniors soaring by more than 60 percent in the last decade.<sup>i</sup> In 2022, more than 1 million seniors were diagnosed with an opioid use disorder,<sup>ii</sup> and more than 50,000 seniors suffered an opioid overdose from prescription opioids, illicit opioids, or both.<sup>iii</sup> In fact, despite a 40 percent nationwide decrease in opioid prescribing over the last decade, opioid prescribing in Medicare increased by 75 percent during that time.<sup>iv</sup>

We urge Congress to ensure that non-opioid therapies are just as accessible to seniors as opioid-based medications. The Alternatives to PAIN Act would do this by establishing patient cost-sharing no greater than generic tier for Medicare Part D beneficiaries receiving non-opioid pain relief. The legislation would also prohibit utilizing step therapy and prior authorization for non-opioid pain management drugs for Medicare Part D beneficiaries.

Further, the opioid epidemic is estimated to cost U.S. taxpayers \$1.5 trillion annually.<sup>v</sup> A Health Management Associates report found that in 2022 alone, opioid use disorder cost the Medicare program \$33 billion.<sup>vi</sup> Congress can cut that cost and save lives by updating Medicare Part D and passing the Alternatives to PAIN Act, which will prevent addiction by increasing access to non-addictive pain management approaches.

With opioid overdose death rates continuing to climb, Congress must remain vigilant in fighting this crisis. Seniors deserve choices when managing their pain or recovering from surgery. In order to prevent addiction and save lives, we urge Congress to pass the Alternatives to PAIN Act.

Together, we can prevent opioid addiction before it starts and, in the process, save lives. We look forward to working with you to enact this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Voices for Non-Opioid Choices

Ambulatory Surgery Center Association

American Addiction Recovery Coalition<sup>vii</sup>

American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

American Psychological Association Services

Asheville Equine Therapy

A Better Life-Brianna's Hope<sup>viii</sup>

A Voice in the Wilderness Empowerment Center

Blue Water Recovery & Outreach Center<sup>ix</sup>

CA Black Health Network

Center of Addiction & Faith

Chatham Drug Free

Clean Living Exceptional Alternative Recovery Residences (CLEARR)

Danny's Ride<sup>x</sup>

Dove Recovery Center for Women<sup>xi</sup>

Elderly Advocates<sup>xii</sup>

Families of Addicts<sup>xiii</sup>

Freedom Through Recovery<sup>xiv</sup>

Georgia for Recovery<sup>xv</sup>

Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

Healing On The Fly Inc

Hear Alex's Story<sup>xvi</sup>

Hep Free Hawaii

Hernando Community Coalition<sup>xvii</sup>

Herren Project

Holistic Homes for Us<sup>xviii</sup>

Hope Haven<sup>xix</sup>

HUGS<sup>xx</sup>

InStep Indy<sup>xxi</sup>

Inclusive Recovery<sup>xxii</sup>  
Iron Tribe Network<sup>xxiii</sup>  
Jake's Reach<sup>xxiv</sup>  
Journey House Foundation  
LITE Recovery Café<sup>xxv</sup>  
Lifeboat Addiction Services<sup>xxvi</sup>  
Operation PAR<sup>xxvii</sup>  
Medicare Rights Center  
Mental Health America  
Mental Health America of Illinois  
Metro Drug Coalition<sup>xxviii</sup>  
Michigan Women Veterans Empowerment  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Rural Health Association  
National Safety Council  
National Transitions of Care Coalition  
Operation First Response, Inc  
Overdose Lifeline  
Parrott Creek Child and Family Services<sup>xxix</sup>  
Partnership for A Healthy Iowa  
Partnership to End Addiction  
Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers Association<sup>xxx</sup>  
Pledge for Life Partnership  
Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction, Inc. (PAACA)<sup>xxxi</sup>  
Prevention Action Alliance  
Prevention Alliance of Tennessee<sup>xxxii</sup>  
Psychophysiologic Disorders Association<sup>xxxiii</sup>  
PTSD Awareness Summit  
Real Life Program  
Recovery Café- Ft. Wayne<sup>xxxiv</sup>  
Recovery Café- Muncie<sup>xxxv</sup>  
Recovery Mobile Clinic<sup>xxxvi</sup>  
RetireSafe  
Safe Haven Recovery Engagement Center<sup>xxxvii</sup>  
Salvage USA  
Shatterproof  
She Recovers Foundation  
Sobar<sup>xxxviii</sup>

Society for Opioid-Free Anesthesia  
Society of Behavioral Medicine  
South End - Roxbury Community Partnership  
Stayin Alive 24 Coalition<sup>xxxix</sup>  
Team Sharing, Inc.  
The Battle Within  
U.S.VETS  
VetPark's A.T.V.  
Veterans National Recovery Center  
Voices For Awareness  
Warren Coalition  
Warrior Path Home  
West Warwick Prevention Coalition  
Will Bright Foundation  
Wyoming Valley Drug & Alcohol Services<sup>xl</sup>  
Young People in Recovery

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<sup>i</sup> Humphreys, Keith; Shover, Chelsea. "Twenty-Year Trends in Drug Overdose Fatalities Among Older Adults in the US." JAMA Psychiatry. March 29, 2023. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/article-abstract/2802945>

<sup>ii</sup> Office of the Inspector General. The Consistently Low Percentage of Medicare Enrollees Receiving Medication to Treat Their Opioid Use Disorder Remains a Concern. December 2023, OEI-02-23-00250. <https://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/OEI-02-23-00250.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> Desmarais, M. (2024). Opioid Use Disorder in the Medicare Fee-for-Service Program. The Moran Company, an HMA Company. <https://www.healthmanagement.com/insights/briefs-reports/economic-analysis-of-opioid-use-disorder-in-the-medicare-fee-for-service-program/>

<sup>v</sup> "The Economic Toll of the Opioid Crisis Reached Nearly \$1.5 Trillion in 2020." The Joint Economic Committee. Sep 28, 2022. [https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/\\_cache/files/67bced7f-4232-40ea-9263-f033d280c567/jec-cost-of-opioids-issue-brief.pdf](https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/67bced7f-4232-40ea-9263-f033d280c567/jec-cost-of-opioids-issue-brief.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid iv.

<sup>vii</sup> Added November 22, 2024.

<sup>viii</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

<sup>ix</sup> Added November 22, 2024.

<sup>x</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

<sup>xi</sup> Added July 19, 2024.

<sup>xii</sup> Added October 25, 2024.

<sup>xiii</sup> Added October 25, 2024.

<sup>xiv</sup> Added November 8, 2024.

<sup>xv</sup> Added November 22, 2024.

<sup>xvi</sup> Added October 25, 2024.

<sup>xvii</sup> Added October 25, 2024.

<sup>xviii</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

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<sup>xxi</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

<sup>xxii</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

<sup>xxv</sup> Added October 18, 2024.

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- xxvi Added December 6, 2024.  
xxvii Added January 10, 2025.  
xxviii Added October 18, 2024.  
xxix Added September 13, 2024.  
xxx Added September 27, 2024.  
xxxi Added November 1, 2024.  
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xxxiv Added November 8, 2024.  
xxxv Added November 1, 2024  
xxxvi Added October 18, 2024.  
xxxvii Added October 18, 2024.  
xxxviii Added November 8, 2024.  
xxxix Added October 18, 2024.  
xl Added November 8, 2024.