



Dear Members of the 119th 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.ⁱ In 2022, more than 1 million seniors were diagnosed with an opioid use disorder,ⁱⁱ and more than 50,000 seniors suffered an opioid overdose from prescription opioids, illicit opioids, or both.ⁱⁱⁱ 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.^{iv}

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.^v A Health Management Associates report found that in 2022 alone, opioid use disorder cost the Medicare program \$33 billion.^{vi} 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^{vii}

American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

American Psychological Association Services

Asheville Equine Therapy

A Better Life-Brianna's Hope^{viii}

A Voice in the Wilderness Empowerment Center

Blue Water Recovery & Outreach Center^{ix}

CA Black Health Network

Center of Addiction & Faith

Chatham Drug Free

Clean Living Exceptional Alternative Recovery Residences (CLEARR)

Danny's Ride^x

Dove Recovery Center for Women^{xi}

Elderly Advocates^{xii}

Families of Addicts^{xiii}

Freedom Through Recovery^{xiv}

Georgia for Recovery^{xv}

Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

Healing On The Fly Inc

Hear Alex's Story^{xvi}

Hep Free Hawaii

Hernando Community Coalition^{xvii}

Herren Project

Holistic Homes for Us^{xviii}

Hope Haven^{xix}

HUGS^{xx}

InStep Indy^{xxi}

Inclusive Recovery^{xxii}
Iron Tribe Network^{xxiii}
Jake's Reach^{xxiv}
Journey House Foundation
LITE Recovery Café^{xxv}
Lifeboat Addiction Services^{xxvi}
Operation PAR^{xxvii}
Medicare Rights Center
Mental Health America
Mental Health America of Illinois
Metro Drug Coalition^{xxviii}
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
Oasis Recovery^{xxix}
Operation First Response, Inc
Overdose Lifeline
Parrott Creek Child and Family Services^{xxx}
Partnership for A Healthy Iowa
Partnership to End Addiction
Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers Association^{xxxi}
Pledge for Life Partnership
Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction, Inc. (PAACA)^{xxxii}
Prevention Action Alliance
Prevention Alliance of Tennessee^{xxxiii}
Psychophysiologic Disorders Association^{xxxiv}
PTSD Awareness Summit
Real Life Program
Recovery Café- Ft. Wayne^{xxxv}
Recovery Café- Muncie^{xxxvi}
Recovery Mobile Clinic^{xxxvii}
RetireSafe
Safe Haven Recovery Engagement Center^{xxxviii}
Salvage USA
Shatterproof
She Recovers Foundation

Sobar^{xxxix}

Society for Opioid-Free Anesthesia
Society of Behavioral Medicine
South End - Roxbury Community Partnership
Stayin Alive 24 Coalition^{xl}
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^{xli}
Young People in Recovery

ⁱ 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>

ⁱⁱ 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>

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} 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/>

^v "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/67bcd7f-4232-40ea-9263-f033d280c567/jec-cost-of-opioids-issue-brief.pdf

^{vi} Ibid iv.

^{vii} Added November 22, 2024.

^{viii} Added October 18, 2024.

^{ix} Added November 22, 2024.

^x Added October 18, 2024.

^{xi} Added July 19, 2024.

^{xii} Added October 25, 2024.

^{xiii} Added October 25, 2024.

^{xiv} Added November 8, 2024.

^{xv} Added November 22, 2024.

^{xvi} Added October 25, 2024.

^{xvii} Added October 25, 2024.

^{xviii} Added October 18, 2024.

^{xix} Added October 18, 2024.

^{xx} Added February 7, 2025.

^{xxi} Added October 18, 2024.

^{xxii} Added October 18, 2024.

^{xxiii} Added October 18, 2024.

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- xxiv Added October 18, 2024.
 - xxv Added October 18, 2024.
 - xxvi Added December 6, 2024.
 - xxvii Added January 10, 2025.
 - xxviii Added October 18, 2024.
 - xxix Added February 21, 2025.
 - xxx Added September 13, 2024.
 - xxxi Added September 27, 2024.
 - xxxii Added November 1, 2024.
 - xxxiii Added October 25, 2024.
 - xxxiv Added November 22, 2024.
 - xxxv Added November 8, 2024.
 - xxxvi Added November 1, 2024.
 - xxxvii Added October 18, 2024.
 - xxxviii Added October 18, 2024.
 - xxxix Added November 8, 2024.
 - xl Added October 18, 2024.
 - xli Added November 8, 2024.