



July 03, 2025

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
U.S. Representative, 2nd District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Buddy Carter
U.S. Representative, 1st District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Allen
U.S. Representative, 12th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hank Johnson
U.S. Representative, 4th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marjorie Taylor Greene
U.S. Representative, 14th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott
U.S. Representative, 13th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Jack
U.S. Representative, 3rd District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barry Loudermilk
U.S. Representative, 11th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Collins
U.S. Representative, 10th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nikema Williams
U.S. Representative, 5th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lucy McBath
U.S. Representative, 7th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Andrew Clyde
U.S. Representative, 9th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rich McCormick
U.S. Representative, 6th District
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Georgia Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of the patients, providers, families, and health professionals our 44 organizations represent, **we urge you to cosponsor 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.

We are grateful for the leadership of Senator Raphael Warnock (D-GA), Senator Ossoff (D-GA), and Representative Scott (R-GA) who have already signed on to support this critical legislation. Their commitment underscores the urgency of addressing the opioid epidemic and improving access to non-opioid pain management options for seniors.

The Non-Opioids Prevent Addiction in the Nation (NOPAIN) Act went into effect on January 1, 2025. This legislation ensures that many surgery patients have access to non-opioid treatments. The legislation covers outpatient surgical procedures covered by Medicare Part B and, as a result, will 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 2021, 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 The latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that, for the first time in the last five years, opioid-related drug overdose deaths increased among older American by nine percent.^{iv}

Further, the opioid epidemic is estimated to cost U.S. taxpayers \$1.5 trillion annually,^v with the Medicare program alone incurring a \$33 billion economic impact in 2022 due to opioid use

disorder.^{vi} This includes approximately 145,000 Medicare beneficiaries newly diagnosed with an opioid use disorder (OUD) that year, each resulting in an additional \$29,669 in annual healthcare costs. Together, these newly diagnosed with an OUD cost Medicare \$4.3 billion in 2022 alone.^{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.

We urge you 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.

With opioid overdose death rates still at a high level, 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 you to cosponsor 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

Georgia Council for Recovery

American Addiction Recovery Association

Stand Recovery Community Organization

The Georgia Faith and Recovery Collaboration

J's Place Recovery Community Organization

Georgians for Responsible Marijuana Policy

Your Haven Recovery Community Organization

Freedom Through Recovery Recovery Community Organization

OASIS Recovery Community Organization

R2ISE Recovery Community Organization

iHOPE Recovery Community Organization

Walton Empowers Recovery Community Organization

Interfaith Addiction and Recovery Coalition

Never Alone Clubhouse Recovery Community Organization

In Ryan's Name
Unified in Recovery Recovery Community Organization
Nick's New Beginnings
North Atlanta Church of Christ Recovery Ministry
Good Powr
Georgia Association of Recovery Residencies
Christopher Wolf Campaign
Stronger Together Recovery Community Organization
Unite Rabun Recovery Community Organization
People Living in Recovery Recovery Community Organization
Life Transitions
Hope For A Drug Free Stephens
The Change Center Recovery Community Organization
Circle of Recovery Recovery Community Organization
Divas Who Win Recovery Community Organization
Rise Up Recovery Community Organization
The Recovery Spot of West Georgia Recovery Community Organization
Self Discovery 24 Recovery Community Organization
Anchored Recovery Wellness
Wayne County Recovery Coalition
Coweta FORCE Recovery Community Organization
Friends of Recovery Troup Recovery Community Organization
The Paula Crane Center Recovery Community Organization
Reboot Jackson Recovery Community Organization
Recovery Connections Recovery Community Organization
Recovery Bartow Recovery Community Organization
Paulding County Recovery Community Organization
Rising Sun Recovery
The ROCC Recovery Community Organization
Gardens of Hope Recovery Community Organization

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 Kwong, Jason; Himmelright, Margaret. "Opioid Overdoses and the Limited Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder Continue To Be Concerns for Medicare Beneficiaries." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General. September 2022. <https://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/OEI-02-22-00390.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Kwong, Jason; Himmelright, Margaret. "Opioid Overdoses and the Limited Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder Continue To Be Concerns for Medicare Beneficiaries." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General. September 2022. <https://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/OEI-02-22-00390.pdf>

^{iv} . “U.S. Overdose Deaths Decrease in 2023, First Time Since 2018.” The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. May 15, 2024. https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/nchs_press_releases/2024/20240515.htm

^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} Desmarais, M. Opioid Use Disorder in the Medicare Fee-for-Service Program. The Moran Company, an HMA Company. June 27, 2024. <https://www.healthmanagement.com/insights/briefs-reports/economic-analysis-of-opioid-use-disorder-in-the-medicare-fee-for-service-program/>