

The Honorable Tom Price, M.D.
Secretary
Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

April XX, 2017

Dear Secretary Price:

As members who represent districts impacted by the growing opioid epidemic, we have seen the toll that has been exacted on communities across our country. Heroin and synthetic opioids are flooding neighborhoods, resulting in addiction, overdose, opioid-related diseases, and thousands of babies requiring opioid detoxification. If this wasn't enough to overwhelm state, local, and federal health agencies, the opioid epidemic is also filling our jails and prisons with individuals convicted of a broad range of opioid-related crimes.

Congress responded to this epidemic, on a bipartisan basis, and addressed opioid addiction through appropriating additional resources by passing the landmark Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act of 2016 (CARA).

One of the key provisions of CARA is §303, which provides severely needed reforms to the nation's opioid addiction treatment system. In particular, §303 updates the Controlled Substances Act and office-based opioid addiction treatment laws by ensuring that patients are offered, and physicians are trained, on all FDA-approved treatments. Under previous law prior to CARA, millions of opioid-addicted patients had their treatment determined based on their setting of care. With the passage of CARA, patients in these settings must now be offered the full range of treatment options based on their individualized clinical needs.

While opioid addiction is not a new problem, over the past decade it has become dramatically worse. We believe proper implementation of CARA will bring relief to our communities which are in desperate need of assistance in battling opioid addiction. CARA enables patients to have access to all of the treatments available for opioid dependence, including relapse prevention, counseling and other appropriate ancillary services to support recovery. We want to underscore our commitment to working with you to address the opioid epidemic by ensuring that all the provisions of CARA are fully implemented.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,