

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 22, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write to you today to urge you to heed the advice of your Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis to lift the Institution for Mental Diseases (IMD) exclusion within the Medicaid program. The opioid crisis is now a national public health emergency. Since 1999, more than 300,000 Americans have died from opioid overdoses. Many of our districts have been hard hit by this crisis. As a result, it remains more important than ever to ensure that everyone has access to treatment.

The IMD exclusion in current Medicaid policy has the unintended consequence of limiting treatment for the most vulnerable populations. Medicaid beneficiaries are more likely to suffer from addiction because they are prescribed painkillers at twice the rate of non-Medicaid patients. Nearly one-third of the Medicaid expansion population has a behavioral health disorder, but old Medicaid rules undermine recent coverage gains.

As the Commission's interim report points out, there is a wide consensus to eliminate this exclusion. Governors, treatment providers, parents, and non-profit advocacy organizations urged the Commission "to eliminate the IMD exclusion within the Medicaid program." We should actively use every weapon in our arsenal to combat this epidemic, which is why we urge you to direct Health and Human Services to rapidly expand access to treatment by granting waivers from the IMD exclusion.

We look forward to working with you in a bipartisan way to combat this national problem.

Sincerely,



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Evan H. Jenkins
Member of Congress



Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress



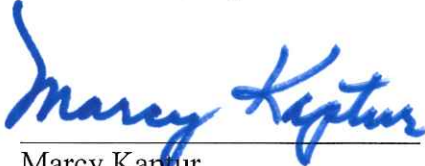
Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



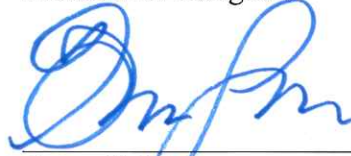
Katherine Clark
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Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress



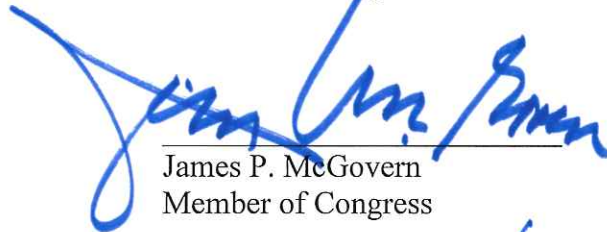
Marcy Kaptur
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Gwen S. Moore
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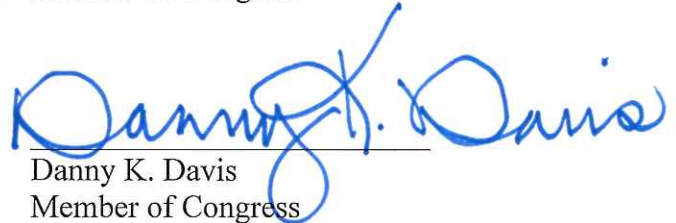
Collin C. Peterson
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James P. McGovern
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Derek Kilmer
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William R. Keating
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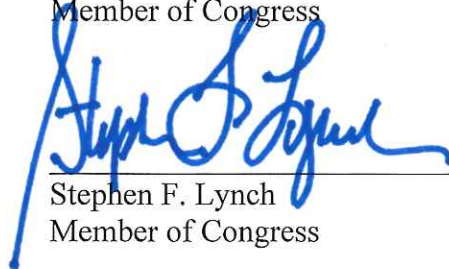
Donald Norcross
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Steve Stivers
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Ted Deutch
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Stephen F. Lynch
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Marcia L. Fudge
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Keith J. Rothfus
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Joyce Beatty
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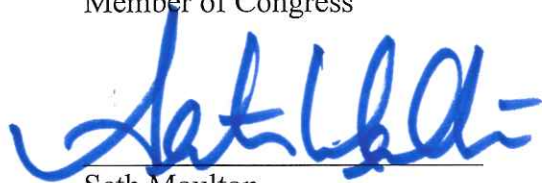
Elizabeth H. Esty
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Norma J. Torres
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Brendan F. Boyle
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Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



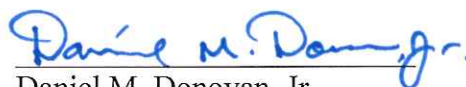
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



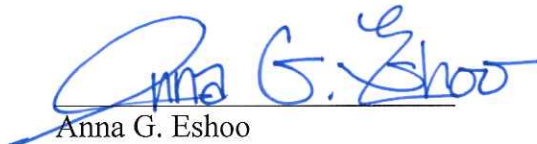
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Steve Cohen
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Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.
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Anna G. Eshoo
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Ann McLane Kuster
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Michelle Lujan Grisham
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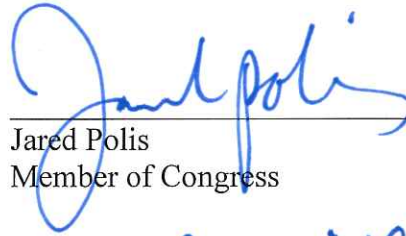
André Carson
Member of Congress



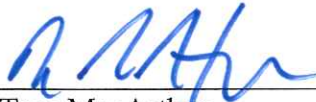
Martha McSally
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Lisa Blunt Rochester
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Alcee L. Hastings
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Carol Shea-Porter
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Sean Duffy
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Jamie Raskin
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Mark DeSaunier
Member of Congress



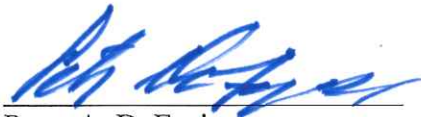
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Pramila Jayapal
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John K. Delaney
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Peter A. DeFazio
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