August 31, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
U.S. Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
U.S. Senate
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510


Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Chair Murray, and Ranking Member Burr:

The 166 undersigned organizations urge you to attach the bipartisan Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act (“MAT Act”, S. 445, H.R. 1384) to the continuing resolution that the Senate will pass in September. In the midst of a deadly and accelerating overdose crisis, the MAT Act is a common-sense solution that will prevent overdoses, increase access to treatment, and reduce stigma.

The MAT Act has strong bipartisan support. The House passed the MAT Act by an overwhelming bipartisan majority as part of the Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act of 2022 (H.R. 7666). With more than 250 Democratic, Republican, and Independent co-sponsors – including the Chairs of the Democratic Caucus and the Republican Conference and Senators from all parties, the MAT Act is among the most broadly supported pieces of overdose prevention legislation introduced in Congress this session. Both President Biden’s and President Trump’s former Directors of the Office of National Drug Control Policy have called for Congress to pass the MAT Act. They join the bipartisan U.S. Commission on Combating Synthetic Opioid Trafficking in urging Congress to pass the policy.

Together, our organizations represent and serve millions on the front lines of the overdose crisis. Our organizations include people and families personally affected by the overdose crisis, law enforcement professionals and first responders, health care and behavioral health providers, Veterans, faith-based leaders, recovery and harm reduction specialists, social justice advocates, payers, and public health experts. We have come together to ask you to act on the overdose crisis in September, which is National Recovery Month. By passing the MAT Act with the September continuing resolution, you have the opportunity to increase access to a treatment that can open the doors of healing and recovery to millions.

The MAT Act removes outdated barriers that prevent health care providers from prescribing a safe and effective treatment for opioid use disorder, known as buprenorphine. Buprenorphine and medications like it cut the risk of overdose death in half and reduce fentanyl use by preventing painful withdrawal symptoms and stemming opioid cravings. The medication has been FDA-approved for opioid use
disorder for twenty years and is available in generic. Buprenorphine is considered a gold standard of care for opioid use disorder because it saves lives and helps individuals secure long-term recovery.iii

But due to outdated federal rules that prevent health care providers from prescribing buprenorphine (known as the “X-waiver”), only about 1 in 10 people with opioid use disorder receive medications for the condition.iv Fully 40% of U.S. counties lack a single health care provider who can prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder.v This lack of access to buprenorphine is devastating our families and causing tens of thousands of preventable overdose deaths each year.vi

**The MAT Act will help integrate substance use treatment into primary care practices, emergency departments, behavioral health care practices, and other health care settings.** The bill will allow all health care providers with a standard controlled medication license to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder, subject to state licensure requirements. The bill will also expand access to training by launching a national education campaign on best practices for treating substance use disorder. The MAT Act will equip states and local governments with a key tool to address the unique treatment needs of their communities.

We have witnessed the profound suffering that overdoses have wrought on our families and communities. More than 108,000 loved ones now lose their lives to an overdose in a year, with 2021 marking the deadliest year yet. Two-thirds of those deaths involved synthetic opioids, including fentanyl.vii If we fail to act, a million more families will bury parents and children due to overdoses over the next decade.viii

We look forward to working together to make the September continuing resolution as impactful as it can be for the millions of families suffering from the overdose crisis. We urge you to pass the **MAT Act** with the September continuing resolution to save lives and support healing. With overdose deaths rising at alarming rates, the time to destigmatize and expand access to safe and effective treatment is now.

Thank you for your consideration. Please reach out to Erin Schanning at End Substance Use Disorder (erin@endsud.org) for more information.

Sincerely,

AIDS United
American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM)
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (AAPM&R)
American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP)
American College of Emergency Physicians
American College of Medical Toxicology
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
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<th>Organization</th>
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<td>American Jail Association</td>
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<td>Association of Prosecuting Attorneys</td>
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<td>Coalition on Human Needs</td>
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<td>Drug Policy Alliance</td>
<td>End Substance Use Disorder</td>
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<td>Fair and Just Prosecution</td>
<td>Friends Committee on National Legislation</td>
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<td>Health in Justice Action Lab</td>
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<td>Inseparable</td>
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<td>International Society for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses</td>
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<td>InterReligious Task Force on Central America and Colombia</td>
<td>Law Enforcement Action Partnership</td>
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<td>Magellan Health</td>
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<td>National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD)</td>
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<td>National Association of Counties (NACo)</td>
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<td>National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners</td>
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National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC)
National Council for Mental Wellbeing

National District Attorneys Association (NDAA)
National Health Care for the Homeless Council

National Health Law Program
National League for Nursing

National Rural Health Association
National Safety Council

National Sheriffs’ Association
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR)

Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New Directions Behavioral Health

Next Harm Reduction aka NEXT Distro
OCHIN

Organizational Wellness Learning Systems
Overdose Crisis Response Fund

Overdose Prevention Initiative at the Global Health Advocacy Incubator
PAIN

Partnership to End Addiction
PAs in Virtual Medicine and Telemedicine

People's Action
Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative (PTACC)

PursueCare
QuickMD

SAFE Project
Society of Behavioral Medicine

Society of Pain and Palliative Care Pharmacists
The Hepatitis C Mentor and Support Group (HCMMSG)

The Kennedy Forum
The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Sentencing Project
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society

Treatment Action Group
Treatment Advocacy Center

Veterans for Common Sense
Wounded Warrior Project
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<th>Organization Name</th>
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<td>Southwest Recovery Alliance (Arizona)</td>
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<td>CA Bridge (California)</td>
<td>Chop Wood, Carry Water Progressive Action Newsletter (California)</td>
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<td>Father Joe's Villages (California)</td>
<td>Monterey County Prescribe Safe Initiative (California)</td>
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<td>Northridge Indivisible (California)</td>
<td>Ascending To Health Respite Care (Colorado)</td>
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<td>Florida Harm Reduction Collective (Florida)</td>
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<td>Hep Free Hawai'i (Hawai'i)</td>
<td>United Vision for Idaho (Idaho)</td>
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<td>Communities United (Illinois)</td>
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<td>Live4Lali (Illinois)</td>
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<td>Hoosier Action (Indiana)</td>
<td>Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (Iowa)</td>
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<td>VOCAL-KY (Kentucky)</td>
<td>Maine People's Alliance (Maine)</td>
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<td>Health Care for the Homeless-Baltimore (Maryland)</td>
<td>Progressive Maryland (Maryland)</td>
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<td>Duffy Health Center (Massachusetts)</td>
<td>Wellness Services Inc. (Michigan)</td>
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<td>Hennepin County, Minnesota (Minnesota)</td>
<td>Rights and Democracy (New Hampshire and Vermont)</td>
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<td>New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc. (New Jersey)</td>
<td>New Jersey Organizing Project (New Jersey)</td>
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<td>Newark Homeless Outreach (New Jersey)</td>
<td>Sea Change RCO (New Jersey)</td>
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Albuquerque Health Care for the Homeless, Inc. (New Mexico)
Care For the Homeless (New York)
Southern Tier AIDS Program/Southern Tier Care Coordination (New York)
VOCAL-NY (New York)
Guilford County Solution to the Opioid Problem (GCSTOP) (North Carolina)
NC Public Health Association (North Carolina)
North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition (North Carolina)
Caracole (Ohio)
Harm Reduction Ohio (Ohio)
Ohio Association of Community Health Centers (OACHC) (Ohio)
Ohio Council of Churches (Ohio)
Showing Up for Racial Justice Ohio (Ohio)
HIV Alliance (Oregon)
Pennsylvania Harm Reduction Network (Pennsylvania)
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) (Pennsylvania)
United Ways of Tennessee (Tennessee)
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (Texas)
Blue Mountain Heart to Heart (Washington)
Amador Health Center (New Mexico)
Citizen Action of New York (New York)
Truth Pharm Inc. (New York)
Benevolence Farm (North Carolina)
Halifax County Health Department (North Carolina)
North Carolina AIDS Action Network (North Carolina)
Tia Hart Community Recovery Program (North Carolina)
Cincinnati Health Network (Ohio)
OhioCAN (Ohio)
River Valley Organizing (Ohio)
Central City Concern (Oregon)
Oregonizers (Oregon)
Reclaim Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)
Project Weber/RENEW (Rhode Island)
United Way of West Tennessee (Tennessee)
Texas Harm Reduction Alliance (Texas)
Country Doctor Community Health Centers (Washington)
Family Health Centers (Washington)  Hassnah Consulting (Washington)


Public Health - Seattle & King County (Washington)  Summit Pacific Medical Center (Washington)

WA Academy of Family Physicians (Washington)  WA Association of Community Health (Washington)


Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) (Washington)  Yakima Neighborhood Health Services (Washington)

WV Citizen Action Group (West Virginia)  Citizen Action of Wisconsin (Wisconsin)

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1 Regina LaBelle, *After a brutal year of overdose deaths, the US needs urgent, coordinated action*, The Hill (Jan. 3, 2021); Jim Carroll, *To save lives from addiction, Congress should pass the MAT Act*, Washington Examiner (May 16, 2022).


7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *12 Month-Ending Provisional Number of Drug Overdose Deaths* (Aug. 2022).