

# VOICES FOR NON-OPIOD CHOICES

May 12, 2025

The Honorable Mike Crapo  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jason Smith  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Crapo, Ranking Member Wyden, Chair Smith, Ranking Member Neal, Chair Guthrie, and Ranking Member Pallone:

On behalf of the patients, providers, families, and health professionals our 101 organizations represent, we urge you to advance the Alternatives to Prevent Addiction in the Nation (Alternatives to PAIN) Act (H.R. 1227/S. 475) as soon as practically possible. This critical legislation is needed 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 older adults in America.

Congress has already taken an important step to expand access to non-opioid treatments through the Non-Opioids Prevent Addiction in the Nation (NOPAIN) Act, which took effect January 1, 2025. This law expands Medicare Part B coverage of non-opioid pain management for outpatient surgical procedures. However, millions of older adults receive care through Medicare Part D, where access to non-opioid therapies remains limited. As a result, these beneficiaries are drawn toward lowest cost pain management options, which are often generic prescription opioids.

Our country's older adults are not immune to the worsening opioid epidemic, with overdose deaths among people 65 years and older soaring by more than 60 percent in the last decade.<sup>i</sup> In 2022, more than 1 million older adults were diagnosed with an opioid use disorder,<sup>ii</sup> and more

than 50,000 suffered an opioid overdose from prescription opioids, illicit opioids, or both.<sup>iii</sup> In fact, despite a 40 percent nationwide decrease in opioid prescribing over the last decade, including some voluntary and successful initiatives among certain providers, opioid prescribing in Medicare persists.<sup>iv</sup>

Congress must remain vigilant in fighting this crisis. Older Americans deserve choices when managing their pain or recovering from surgery.

The Alternatives to PAIN Act provides a timely and commonsense solution to one of the most pressing public health challenges of our time. By aligning cost-sharing for non-opioid pain management in Medicare Part D with that of generic opioids, and removing unnecessary utilization barriers, this bill would ensure patients and providers have real and affordable choices in treating post-surgical acute pain.

We are hopeful Congress will seize the first opportunity to move this critical legislation forward and ensure that people aged 65 and older have access to safe and effective non-opioid options for pain management.

Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to protecting the health and well-being of America's older adults. Together, we can prevent opioid addiction before it starts and, in the process, save lives.

Sincerely,

Voices for Non-Opioid Choices  
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association  
American Addiction Recovery Coalition  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons  
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons  
Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation  
Asheville Equine Therapy  
Association for the Treatment of Neuroplastic Symptoms  
A Better Life-Brianna's Hope  
A Voice in the Wilderness Empowerment Center  
Blue Water Recovery & Outreach Center  
CA Black Health Network  
Center of Addiction & Faith  
Chatham Drug Free  
Clean Living Exceptional Alternative Recovery Residences  
Coalition for Behavioral Health  
Coalition for Behavioral Health-Houston  
Danny's Ride  
Dove Recovery Center for Women  
Elderly Advocates  
El Rancho De la Vida  
Face Addiction Now  
Families of Addicts

Freedom Through Recovery  
Facing Fentanyl  
Georgia Council for Recovery  
Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center  
Healing On The Fly Inc  
Hear Alex's Story  
Hep Free Hawaii  
Hernando Community Coalition  
Herren Project  
Holistic Homes for Us  
Home of the Brave Veterans Transitional House  
HTX H.O.P.E. Haven  
House of Hope  
HUGS  
InStep Indy  
Inclusive Recovery  
Iron Tribe Network  
Jake's Reach  
Journey House Foundation  
Latino Recovery Advocacy  
LITE Recovery Café  
Lifeboat Addiction Services  
Medicare Rights Center  
Mental Health America  
Mental Health America of Dallas  
Mental Health America of Illinois  
Mental Health and Addiction Advocacy Coalition  
Metro Drug Coalition  
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  
Operation First Response, Inc  
Operation PAR  
Overdose Lifeline  
Parrott Creek Child and Family Services  
Partnership for A Healthy Iowa  
Partnership to End Addiction  
Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers Association  
Pledge for Life Partnership  
Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction, Inc.  
Prevention Action Alliance  
Prevention Alliance of Tennessee  
PTSD Awareness Summit

Real Life Program  
Recovery Café- Ft. Wayne  
Recovery Mobile Clinic  
RetireSafe  
Ruyts Foundation  
Safe Haven Recovery Engagement Center  
Salvage USA  
Shatterproof  
She Recovers Foundation  
Sobar  
Society for Opioid-Free Anesthesia  
Society of Behavioral Medicine  
South End - Roxbury Community Partnership  
Stayin Alive 24 Coalition  
Step Up Foundation  
Stronger Sober House  
Team Sharing, Inc.  
The Addicts Parents United  
The Anthony House  
The Battle Within  
U.S.VETS  
Veterans National Recovery Center  
VetPark's A.T.V.  
Voices For Awareness  
Warren Coalition  
West Warwick Prevention Coalition  
Will Bright Foundation  
Wyoming Valley Alcohol and Drug Services, Inc.  
Young People in Recovery

**Cc:** The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Cc:** The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Cc:** The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Cc:** The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20515

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<sup>i</sup> 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>

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<sup>ii</sup> 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>

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> IQVIA (2020, December 16). Prescription Opioid Trends in the United States. <https://www.iqvia.com/insights/the-iqvia-institute/reports-and-publications/reports/prescription-opioid-trends-in-the-united-states>