



National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors

Summary of Testimony Submitted by Robert Morrison, Executive Director, National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD), Senate HELP Committee, April 11, 2018

About NASADAD: NASADAD is a private, not-for-profit organization that promotes effective and efficient State substance use disorder (SUD) prevention, treatment and recovery systems. NASADAD seeks to: serve as the national voice of State alcohol and drug agencies; foster partnerships among States, Federal agencies and other national organizations; develop and disseminate knowledge of innovative SUD programs policies and practices; and promote key competencies of effective State alcohol and drug agencies.

Critical role of the State alcohol and drug agency: Each State's alcohol and drug agency plays a critical role in overseeing and implementing the publicly funded prevention, treatment and recovery service system. In addition to planning and oversight, these State agencies: ensure quality services through State-established standards of care; manage the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant; promote coordination across State government; maintain a unique relationship with providers by offering training, continuing education, oversight, and other support; and collect and report data that describes the services/ programs in the publicly-funded system.

States appreciate action taken by Congress to address the opioid crisis: NASADAD applauds passage of the 21st Century Cures Act and the resulting State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis (STR) Grants. The State alcohol and drug agencies are working diligently to use these STR funds to enhance evidence based prevention, treatment, and recovery services for individuals impacted by the opioid crisis. NASADAD is also grateful for the Committee's work to pass the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA). CARA created several initiatives. States are working to implement the many important provisions authorized in CARA.

NASADAD's overarching recommendations:

- Ensure provisions work through and coordinate with State alcohol and drug agencies to promote efficient and effective systems and avoid creating parallel, duplicative, or bifurcated systems of care.
- Ensure consistent, predictable and sustained resources to avoid a fiscal cliff by extending the duration of federal grants beyond the typical one- or two-year funding cycle.
- Continue to work to address the opioid crisis but also elevate efforts to address all SUDs.
- Maintain investments in SAMHSA as the lead agency within HHS focused on SUDs.

NASADAD's observations on selected provisions of the Opioid Crisis Response Act:

Reauthorization and Improvement of STR Grants: NASADAD applauds the Committee for considering the reauthorization and improvement of the STR grants. As discussions on the provision move forward, we hope these resources would continue to align with the plan and work of State alcohol and drug agencies. NASADAD is eager to discuss how the SAPT Block Grant could also be utilized to efficiently direct funds to support service delivery.

National Recovery Housing Best Practices: We applaud this provision and hope that State alcohol and drug agencies would be specifically referenced as a stakeholder to help with the development of these models.

Plans of Safe Care: We support the provision and look forward to working to address SUDs in child welfare system.

Loan Repayment for Substance Use Disorder Treatment Providers: We applaud this provision that supports loan repayment for SUD treatment providers, and recommend support for substance abuse prevention workforce as well.

Surveillance and Education Regarding Infections Associated with Injection Drug Use: We support this provision that seeks to improve data and therefore our knowledge about infections associated with injection drug use.

NASADAD's recommendations to for additional provisions:

Enhancing school-based substance abuse prevention through enhanced agency collaboration: NASADAD recommends the authorization of a grant program within SAMHSA/CSAP to enhance collaboration between State alcohol and drug agencies and State educational agencies to enhance their capacity to support the implementation of effective, school-based substance abuse prevention activities.