



May 3, 2021

The Honorable David Trone
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Judy Chu
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Levin
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David B. McKinley
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Reps. Trone, Chu, Levin, and McKinley:

The undersigned mental health, substance use disorder, and health care professional organizations in the Coalition to Stop Opioid Overdose (CSOO) are writing today to support your recent introduction of the Excellence in Recovery Housing Act. This critical piece of legislation would greatly improve our nation's understanding of the quality, effectiveness, and availability of recovery housing; better coordinate the federal government's efforts in this regard, and help create guidelines for states to promote the availability of high-quality recovery housing. With recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showing drug overdose deaths in the U.S. are now at their highest level ever, soaring to more than 88,000 in the 12-month period to August 2020,ⁱ the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic indicates that recovery housing will likely play an increasingly critical role in the recovery of thousands of Americans.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recognizes recovery housing as "an intervention that is specifically designed to address the recovering person's need for a safe and healthy living environment while supplying the requisite recovery and peer supports."ⁱⁱ However, states do not always provide effective oversight of recovery housing, and recovery housing supply and quality vary.ⁱⁱⁱ To help address this problem, the Excellence in Recovery Housing Act would advance the following, bold actions to improve recovery housing across America:

- Bring together the federal government and relevant stakeholders to develop guidelines for states to promote the availability of high-quality recovery housing. Importantly, your legislation explicitly provides that such guidelines may not address clinical treatment services, which shall remain outside the guidelines' scope;
- Provide grants to states to implement the guidelines;
- Require the National Academy of Sciences to study the current availability, quality, and effectiveness of recovery housing and make related recommendations, including with

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respect to improving access to recovery housing for people who take medications for addiction treatment; and

- Increase collaboration in promoting the availability of high-quality recovery housing through the establishment of an interagency workgroup, to be led by SAMHSA and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Together, these policy initiatives would help more Americans living with substance use disorder maintain their recovery. Swift enactment of the Excellence in Recovery Housing Act and its implementation are needed now more than ever. Thank you for your leadership and for your ongoing commitment to ensure Americans with substance use disorder can access the recovery support services they need.

Sincerely,

Addiction Professionals of North Carolina
American College of Medical Toxicology
American Psychological Association
American Society of Addiction Medicine
A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Behavioral Health Association of Providers
CADA of Northwest Louisiana
California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals
Central City Concern
Faces & Voices of Recovery
Live4Lali
NAMA Recovery
National Association for Behavioral Healthcare
National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers
National Council for Behavioral Health
Partnership to End Addiction
SMART Recovery
The Kennedy Forum
Treatment Communities of America
Well Being Trust
Young People in Recovery

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ⁱ Ahmad FB, Rossen LM, Sutton P. Provisional drug overdose death counts. National Center for Health Statistics. 2021.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/housing-best-practices-100819.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Id.