



July 26, 2021

The Honorable Lori Trahan
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Trahan,

The undersigned addiction, mental health, and health care professional organizations in the Coalition to Stop Opioid Overdose (CSOO) write to endorse your House Resolution 349, which would support the goals of Overdose Awareness Day by lowering the United States flag to half-staff on all Federal buildings on August 31st of each year. According to data recently released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the country's overdose crisis remains unabated. It's now estimated that there were over 93,000 deaths due to a drug overdose in the U.S. last year – representing an increase of almost 30% compared to 2019.ⁱ Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have only exacerbated this horrific loss of life. It is time for the federal government to recognize this tragedy by flying flags at half-staff.

While many Americans across this country have worked tirelessly to improve access to prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery support services to help those struggling with substance use disorder (SUD), people with SUD are still often stigmatized, discriminated against, and marginalized. Thus, not only would lowering flags to half-staff help honor those we have already lost to addiction and overdose, but it would serve as a national reminder that all Americans living with SUD deserve our compassion and respect.

Thank you for your leadership and for your ongoing commitment to ensuring Americans with SUD can access the care they need. We stand ready to work with you on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

American College of Medical Toxicology
American Society of Addiction Medicine
American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine
American Psychiatric Association
A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Faces & Voices of Recovery
Live4Lali
Moms United to End the War on Drugs
NAMA Recovery
National Association for Behavioral Healthcare

COALITION TO
STOP OPIOID
OVERDOSE

National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists
National Board for Certified Counselors
National Council for Mental Wellbeing
National Safety Council
Partnership to End Addiction
SMART Recovery
Shatterproof
Suncoast Harm Reduction Project
The Kennedy Forum
The McShin Foundation
Treatment Communities of America
Young People in Recovery
Well Being Trust

¹ Ahmad FB, Rossen LM, Sutton P. Provisional drug overdose death counts. National Center for Health Statistics. 2021.