

DISTRICT OFFICES:
119 N. COMMERCIAL STREET, SUITE 1350
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225
(360) 733-4500

2930 WETMORE AVENUE, SUITE 9F
EVERETT, WA 98201
(425) 252-3188

E-Mail: Rick.Larsen@mail.house.gov
<http://larsen.house.gov>

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4702

April 26, 2016

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education
House Committee on Appropriations
H-309 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
H-309 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Honda
Acting Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole, Chairman Culberson, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Acting Ranking Member Honda:

We write to express our support for the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 plan to combat the opioid epidemic. We think that helping people who are battling prescription drug abuse and heroin abuse should be a bipartisan priority.

Overdoses and deaths related to heroin and prescription painkillers have increased sharply over the past few years, particularly in Washington state. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration the number of overdose-related deaths is greater than of car accidents and firearms deaths combined.

About 600 people die each year in Washington due to an opioid overdose. Many users begin by abusing prescription drugs such as hydrocodone and oxycodone, and then switch to heroin because it is cheaper and easier to access. As a result, 914,000 Americans aged 12 or older used heroin in 2014. According to the Washington State Department of Health the number of deaths from heroin reached 293 people in 2014, about twice as many as in 2008. Bold action must be taken to provide swift and immediate treatment to manage overdose of opioids.

Substance abuse has been stigmatized as a moral failing for far too long. We are poised and ready to work with you in order to figure out a solution to this national epidemic.

Sincerely,



Rep. Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Rep. Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Rep. Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Rep. Denny Heck
Member of Congress



Rep. Jim McDermott
Member of Congress