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Addiction Medicine

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May 10, 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan
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H-107, The Capitol
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House Minority Whip
1705 Longworth House Office Building
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear House Leaders:

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) applauds the attention and consideration the House is dedicating to the opioid misuse and overdose epidemic. However, while ASAM is pleased the legislation temporarily expands prescribing authority for nurse practitioners and physician assistants, we are deeply concerned that the version of the *Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Expansion and Modernization Act* (HR 4981) that will be considered by the full House this week will not raise the patient caps on buprenorphine prescribing for physicians and overall is an inadequate response to the opioid epidemic.

ASAM is a professional medical society representing over 3,800 physicians dedicated to increasing access and improving quality of addiction treatment, educating physicians and the public,

supporting research and prevention and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addictions.

ASAM physicians worked diligently on a transparent process with Congressmen Bucshon and Tonko to develop HR 4981. While ASAM members prefer the buprenorphine patient limits included in the *Recovery Enhancement for Addiction Treatment Act* as reported by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee on March 16th, we believe the Energy and Commerce Committee's approval of the bill was an important first step in addressing this important issue. The full House should consider this legislation as reported by the Energy and Commerce Committee and we urge that a House/Senate conference be expeditiously undertaken.

While the Administration has begun a rulemaking process to review raising the caps, thousands of comments will be filed and it is misguided to assume the final rule will include the same increase in the cap as the proposed rule. Given the numbers of Americans who are dying from opioid overdoses, we call on Congress to act swiftly to increase access to potentially life-saving addiction treatment.

We are committed to helping Congress move legislation this year that will increase the patient caps on buprenorphine prescribing. To that end, we pledge the expertise of ASAM and our members as the process moves forward to finalize the legislation.

We look forward to working with you to pass legislation combatting the opioid epidemic this year. Please reach out to ASAM's CEO, Penny Mills (pmills@asam.org) if we can be of further help in this or other addiction related matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Jeffrey Goldsmith, MD". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "J".

R. Jeffrey Goldsmith, MD, DLFAPA, FASASM
President, American Society of Addiction Medicine

CC: The Honorable Fred Upton
The Honorable Frank Pallone
The Honorable Larry Bucshon
The Honorable Paul Tonko