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April 25, 2016

The Honorable Michael D. Thibodeau
President of the Senate

The Honorable Garrett P. Mason
Senate Republican Majority Leader

The Honorable Justin L. Alford
Senate Democratic Minority Leader

The Honorable Mark W. Eves
Speaker of the House

The Honorable Jeff M. McCabe
Majority Floor Leader

The Honorable Kenneth W. Fredette
Republican Floor Leader

Dear President Thibodeau, Senator Mason, Senator Alford,
Speaker Eves, Representative McCabe and Representative
Fredette:

On behalf of the American Society of Addiction Medicine
(ASAM), the nation's largest medical specialty society
representing physicians and other clinicians who specialize in
addiction treatment, and the Northern New England Society of
Addiction Medicine (NNESAM), we write to express our strong
support for LD 1547, "An Act To Facilitate Access to Naloxone
Hydrochloride," and encourage the Maine legislature to override
the Governor's veto.

Contrary to the Governor's objections, expanding access to
naloxone in Maine will most certainly save lives. Naloxone is a
fast-acting, inexpensive, non-addictive medication. It reverses
the respiratory arrest that kills overdose patients. It can be
administered by trained lay individuals in the case of observed
overdose, much as AEDs can be used to save lives in cardiac
arrests in the community. Allowing pharmacists to dispense
naloxone without a prescription to individuals at risk of

experiencing an opioid overdose or to a friend or family member of someone at risk, as LD 1547 would do, would increase access to a life-saving medication and increase opportunities for people with addiction to enter treatment and recovery.

As you know, this bill has received wide support from law enforcement and health professional groups alike, and we add our voice to that chorus of support. At a time when Maine is experiencing an epidemic of opioid addiction and overdose deaths, it is crucial that we use every tool at our disposal to keep people alive so that they have the chance to pursue rewarding lives. We strongly urge you and your colleagues to offer compassion and embrace science in overriding Governor LePage's veto and passing LD 1547.

Sincerely,



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



Daniel Graubert, MD
President, Northern New England Society of Addiction Medicine



Mark Publicker, MD, FASAM
Past President, Northern New England Society of Addiction Medicine