



**ASAM** American Society of  
Addiction Medicine

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## **Passage of Senate Opioid Package: Statement from the American Society of Addiction Medicine**

**Rockville, MD (September 17, 2018)** – Following news of the US Senate’s passage of its opioid legislative package, **American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) President Kelly J. Clark, MD, MBA, DFASAM**, issued the following statement:

“We commend Senate leaders for their diligent and bipartisan work to address the opioid overdose epidemic. A crisis of this magnitude requires bold and comprehensive legislation that helps teach, standardize, and cover evidence-based addiction medicine. To that end, it is imperative that the final conferenced legislative package addressing the opioid overdose epidemic includes the following key provisions:

- A stand-alone student loan repayment program dedicated to increasing the number of substance use disorder (SUD) treatment providers who practice in high-need areas;
- Expanded access to medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder, including through permanent buprenorphine prescribing authority for nurse practitioners and physician assistants;
- A voluntary pathway for physicians to obtain a waiver to treat patients with opioid use disorder using buprenorphine by taking approved courses during medical school or residency programs and the establishment of a grant program to support the development of addiction medicine curricula;
- A requirement for explicit guidance on evidence-based practices for entities applying for SAMSHA grants;
- Modernization of 42 CFR Part 2, enabling greater integration of mental health, SUD, and primary care services to improve patient outcomes and safety;
- A requirement of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to convene a stakeholder group with the goal of improving health care related transitions for inmates of public institutions; and

- A limited repeal of the IMD exclusion (benefitting people with SUD) for those residential treatment programs that can deliver services consistent with the ASAM Criteria (or other nationally-recognized, evidence-based SUD-specific set of criteria), including providing access to FDA-approved medications for the treatment of opioid use disorder.

These provisions – which will help grow our country’s addiction treatment workforce, provide standardized, evidence-based SUD treatment, and ensure that coverage and payment models facilitate continuity of care for patients with SUD are crucial to saving lives.”

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### **About ASAM**

The American Society of Addiction Medicine, founded in 1954, is a professional society representing over 6,000 physicians, clinicians, and associated professionals in the field of addiction medicine. ASAM is dedicated to increasing access and improving the 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 addiction. For more information, visit [www.ASAM.org](http://www.ASAM.org).