



**ASAM** American Society of  
Addiction Medicine

**For Immediate Release**  
October 3, 2018

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## **ASAM Applauds Senate Passage of Bipartisan Opioid Package**

*Legislation is an Important Step Forward to Close the Addiction Treatment Gap and Teach, Standardize, and Cover Addiction Medicine*

**Rockville, MD (October 3, 2018)** - The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) today applauds Senate leaders for passing a robust, bipartisan legislative package aimed at addressing the nation's opioid overdose epidemic. The package, known as the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act (H.R. 6), is the result of a bipartisan agreement among House and Senate lawmakers. It includes key provisions to bolster the country's addiction treatment workforce, provide standardized, evidence-based treatment for substance use disorder (SUD), and ensure that coverage and payment models facilitate continuity of care for patients with SUD. The legislation overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives last Friday and now heads to the White House for the President's signature.

"ASAM applauds Senate leaders for passing this legislation, which is an important step in ensuring individuals with substance use disorder are able to get the help they need," said Kelly J. Clark, MD, MBA, DFASAM, president of ASAM. "Addressing the opioid overdose epidemic will require bold action, including a radical transformation of our treatment system into one that universally teaches, standardizes, and covers evidence-based addiction treatment. We commend Senate leaders for moving us closer toward that goal with today's historic vote."

The SUPPORT Act contains a number of provisions aimed at increasing access to evidence-based addiction treatment, including:

- New and extended buprenorphine prescribing authority for physician assistants and nurse practitioners and additional pathways for practicing physicians to obtain waivers to prescribe medication assisted treatment (MAT) for SUD;
- Loan repayment relief to addiction treatment professionals who practice in high-need areas;
- The creation of a Medicare demonstration program that covers evidence-based outpatient treatment for beneficiaries with opioid use disorder; and

- Partial repeal of the Medicaid IMD exclusion that allows state Medicaid programs to cover inpatient treatment in residential facilities that can deliver services consistent with certain requirements, including evidence-based assessments and levels of care.

For more information about the American Society of Addiction Medicine, please visit [www.ASAM.org](http://www.ASAM.org).

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#### **About ASAM**

The American Society of Addiction Medicine, founded in 1954, is a professional society representing over 6,100 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).