



The Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Reduction Act Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. Fact Sheet

Heroin and opioid addiction is a widespread epidemic

- According to the CDC, in 2014 more persons died from drug overdoses than any other year on record.
- This epidemic has been fueled by drastic increases in both heroin and prescription opioid use and addiction.
- The combination of New Jersey residents addicted to heroin or prescription opioids is approximately the same as the entire population of Newark or roughly 256,000 people.

We cannot win the fight against heroin and opioid addiction unless we use proven public health approaches spanning the entire spectrum from crisis to recovery

- A comprehensive solution to the crisis will require real dollars and must take an approach that targets the entire spectrum of addiction: prevention, crisis response for those who fall through the cracks, expanding access to treatment, and providing support for lifelong recovery.
- The approach must be guided by science and cannot be deterred because of stigma or misperceptions about proven treatment strategies
- The critical missing link in our current public health response to heroin and opioid abuse is patient access to necessary treatments and services.

The Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Reduction Act increases patient access at all stages in heroin or opioid dependence

- The bill increases patient access to medication-assisted treatment by addressing the unfounded, arbitrary limit on a provider's ability to care for a patient using buprenorphine, an FDA-approved, evidence-based treatment for opioid use disorders.
- It authorizes \$300 million annually in grants to expand access to treatment, including medication-assisted treatment, focusing on regions experiencing rapid increases in heroin and prescription opioid use.
- It ensures that naloxone reaches communities that need it the most. Naloxone is a safe and effective antidote that saves lives in the event of an overdose.
- The bill also authorizes \$15 million annually in grants to fund syringe exchange programs, which are a proven approach to connect patients to treatment while decreasing the spread of HIV and Hepatitis C.
- It strengthens parity in substance use disorder benefits by requiring insurance companies to provide greater disclosure and by increasing audits and enforcement by the federal agencies responsible for implementing parity.
- The bill also strengthens recovery support services and creates a new grant program for accredited recovery high schools and institutions of higher education to provide substance use recovery support services to high school and college students.
- This epidemic can only be stopped by putting real resources into addressing the problem. Overall, this bill commits more than \$500 million annually in new federal dollars.