

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 22, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20004

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid,

As the 114th Congress comes to a close and the Senate looks to complete its work for the year, our country's opioid epidemic continues to worsen at an alarming rate. It is now time to follow through on recent efforts to address the epidemic by providing the necessary funding to help our communities combat this crisis. It is our responsibility to all Americans to provide immediate funding to address the opioid epidemic before the end of the year.

In July, Congress passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) that authorizes important new programs for states and local organizations to address substance use, misuse and use disorders. The legislation expanded access to medication-assisted treatment, provided new resources to strengthen state Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs, and improve the availability of the overdose reversal drug naloxone. However, Congress has still not provided sufficient funding to implement this new law. In the face of this national crisis it is critical for us to come together as a governing body to make progress on this in order to help those suffering on the front lines of addiction.


Congress has debated two proposals to provide needed investments to increase access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services related to opioid use, misuse, and use disorders. Senator Shaheen's *Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act* (S.2423) would immediately commit \$600 million in emergency funding to support the work of our first responders, health care providers, and law enforcement as they continue to fight this crisis on the ground. Earlier this year during the CARA debate, this measure received bipartisan support.

Second, the *Expanded Access to Treatment and Recovery Act* (S.3223), which would provide \$920 million over two years to support state efforts to expand treatment capacity and make services more affordable. We stand ready to come together to help foster broader bipartisan support for approving funding to address the opioid epidemic. The President-elect has also noted his desire to address this issue. For that reason, we are calling on you to include substantial funding to combat the opioid epidemic in the 21st Century Cures Act that is being considered for passage during the Lame Duck session.

This epidemic knows no political party. Substance use, misuse, and use disorders are national problems that continue to cripple our communities. Our law enforcement, health care system, families, and states simply cannot tackle the problem alone and without necessary resources. As the end of the year fast approaches, it is past time for Republicans and Democrats to come together to provide emergency funding and increase investments in prevention and treatment services for opioid use, misuse, and use disorders. Until we do, our job is not done and our communities will continue to hurt. We urge you to act immediately to ensure that Congress fulfills its commitment to the American people by providing

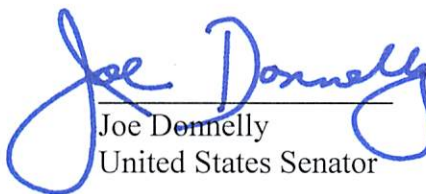
adequate resources to help quell this epidemic in the 21st Century Cures Act. We stand ready and look forward to working with you to swiftly achieve this goal.

Sincerely,


Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator


Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator


Edward J. Markey
United States Senator


Joe Donnelly
United States Senator