

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 25, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you finalize the emergency declaration on opioid abuse, we urge you to follow the recommendations of your Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis and allow the government to negotiate lower prices for life-saving opioid overdose reversal drugs.

The opioid epidemic now claims 142 lives every day, and it is still getting worse. Drug overdoses are the leading cause of death for Americans under 50, exceeding the peak car crash deaths and H.I.V. deaths decades earlier. Access to naloxone, a life-saving opioid overdose reversal drug, is particularly important given the magnitude of the epidemic.

Initially approved by the FDA in 1971, naloxone is used in hospitals and emergency rooms, by first responders, and by members of our communities to revive victims and restart their breathing. Unfortunately, the price of the drug itself has increased dramatically during the epidemic. The prices are highest for newer devices that make delivering the medication easier. Narcan, which administers naloxone as a nasal spray, costs \$150 for a two pack and Evzio, a naloxone auto-injector, has increased from \$690 in 2014 to \$4,500 today for a two pack.

Your Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and Opioid Crisis recommends dramatically increasing access to naloxone, and says that “By declaring a national emergency, you can empower the HHS Secretary to negotiate reduced pricing for all governmental units.”

We strongly agree with the recommendation, and urge you to give the Secretary this authority immediately. By doing this, you can put the important medication in the hands of more people and save lives. We hope the policy will be the first step towards substantial action to bring down the cost of all drugs through negotiation and other policies, and part of a comprehensive emergency declaration that includes the investments needed to end the epidemic.

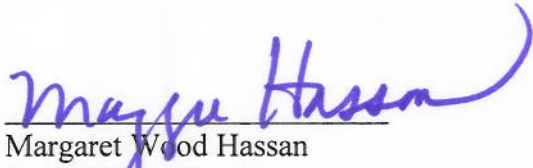
Sincerely,



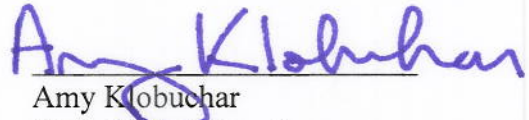
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



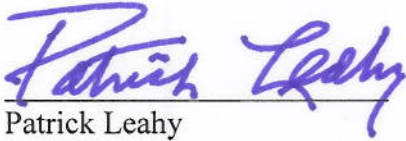
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



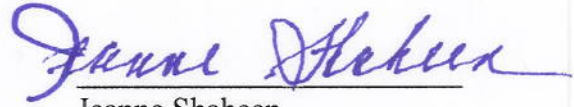
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



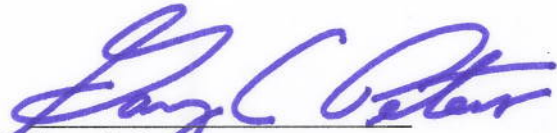
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



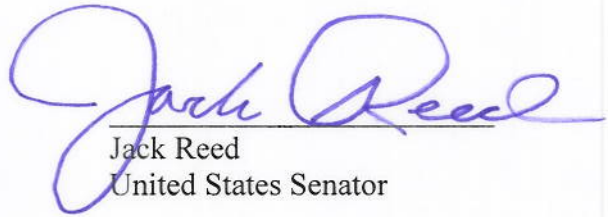
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



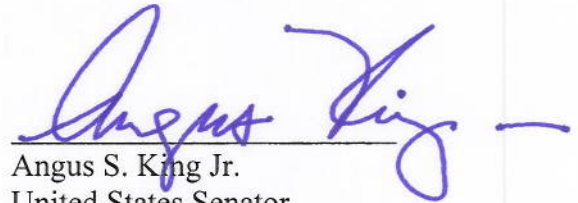
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



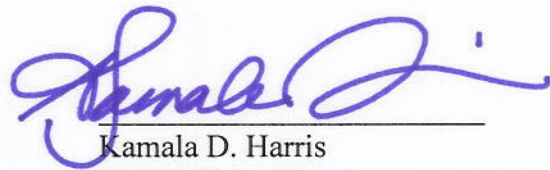
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Angus S. King Jr.
United States Senator



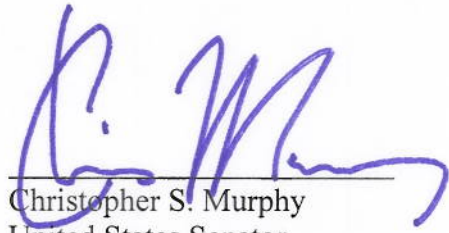
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



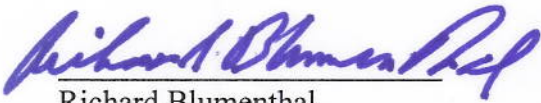
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



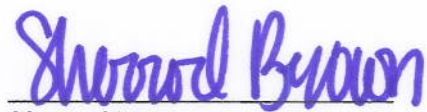
Al Franken
United States Senator



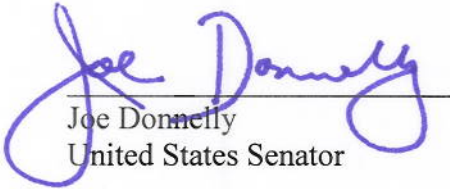
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Joe Donnelly
United States Senator