

## **First Look: Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Act (HR 6, 115th Congress)**

Implements a wide variety of programs and initiatives to address the opioid crisis in the United States.

Updated last **July 30, 2018**  
for the 06/26/2018 version of HR 6.

### **WHAT IT DOES**

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[HR 6](#) would undertake a multitude of actions to address the opioid crisis in the United States by amending the following laws:

- [Social Security Act](#);
- [Controlled Substance Act](#);
- [Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act](#);
- [Public Health Service Act](#);
- [Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985](#);
- [Trade Act of 2002](#);
- [Tariff Act of 1930](#);
- [Title 38 of the US Code](#);
- [Omnibus Crime Control Safe Streets Act of 1968](#); and
- [US Housing Act of 1937](#).

By amending those laws, HR 6 introduces several new provisions targeted at enhancing US systems of prevention, recovery, and treatment. Changes would be made to:

- Medicaid coverage by ensuring:
  - Medical assistance eligibility for juvenile inmates;
  - Streamlined, timely access to Medicaid coverage for former foster youth up to age 26;
  - Mental health and substance use services for targeted low-income children and pregnant women;
  - A qualified drug management program that will identify individuals who are at risk for abuse or misuse of controlled substances and designate them to healthcare providers and pharmacies for which the prescriptions of any controlled substance will be covered by the state;
  - Health home services to substance use disorder-eligible individuals; and
  - Coverage for [medication-assisted treatment](#).
- Medicare Coverage by ensuring:
  - Screening for [opioid use disorder](#) in all Medicare recipients;
  - Electronic transmission of prescription;
  - Drug management programs for at-risk beneficiaries; and
  - Coverage for opioid agonist and antagonist treatment medication, substance use counseling, individual or group therapy with a physician or a psychologist, toxicology testing, and other treatment-appropriate services.

In addition, HR 6 aims to:

- Increase the number of qualified prescribers and healthcare providers and diversify their roles by:
  - Removing the limitations on time required to become nurse practitioners and physician assistants;
  - Increasing a pharmacist's level of jurisdiction over declining to fill a prescription for controlled substances due to prescriptions that appear fraudulent, forged, or indicative of abuse or diversion;

- Ensuring the right of hospice care facility workers to handle and dispose of any controlled substance that was lawfully dispensed to persons receiving hospice care;
- Ensuring that substance use disorder treatment employees will receive a payment for any relative education that required the worker to seek out a loan;
- Ensuring that no less than 50 Veteran Justice Outreach Specialists are hired to each be placed at a Veterans Affairs Medical Center; and
- Ensuring an increase in support counselors for women.
- Increase communication of viable information within and between healthcare providers and patients by ensuring:
  - The adoption of certified [Electronic Health Record](#) technology;
  - Educational resources on opioids and opioid alternatives;
  - Resources and information on proper prescribing methods;
  - Pain management guidelines for hospitals;
  - A public information dashboard from Health and Human Services that outlines best practices;
  - A nationwide toll-free phone number to poison control centers; and
  - A national public awareness campaign.

Finally, HR 6 would advance research and development by setting up two major initiatives. The Research Initiative aims to ensure high impact cutting-edge research that fosters scientific creativity and increases fundamental biological understanding on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases and disorders. This initiative would include research required to respond to public health threats. And a second initiative aims to identify and develop technology for the detection of illicit fentanyl and other synthetic opioids entering the US by mail.

#### STATUS

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HR 6 was passed in the House of Representatives on June 22, 2018. It was introduced in the Senate on June 25, 2018.

#### SPONSORS

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Sponsor: [Representative Greg Walden](#) (R-OR-2)

Cosponsors:

- [Representative Frank Pallone Jr.](#) (D-NJ-6)
- [Representative Kevin Brady](#) (R-TX-8)
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**RECOMMENDED CITATION**

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