



The Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act

116th Congress

Sponsors: Reps. Paul Tonko (D-NY), Antonio Delgado (D-NY), Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Ted Budd (R-NC)

"The devastation of America's opioid crisis has touched every part of our country, and access to treatment is a matter of life and death. Our national response needs to rise to meet the unprecedented scale of this crisis."

❖ Paul Tonko

America is in the midst of an overdose epidemic

- **70,237 people died of an overdose** in America in 2017, more than automotive & gun deaths combined
- Overdose fatalities are now **the leading cause of death for Americans under 50**
- Americans are **dying from this illness faster than they did at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic** that sparked a national movement to address it
- **Just 1 in 5 individuals** with a substance use disorder is getting the treatment they need

Access to treatment is a life-saving answer

- For two decades, **buprenorphine** has been used as a safe, effective and life-saving **medication-assisted treatment** for individuals suffering from a substance use disorder
- Medical professionals need a **special DEA waiver** to prescribe buprenorphine to treat substance use disorder, which leads to treatment bottlenecks and a lack of providers
- This outdated waiver requirement has stuck around even though **medical professionals can prescribe the same drug for pain** without jumping through bureaucratic hoops
- Removing this barrier will **massively expand treatment access**, making it easier for medical professionals to integrate substance use disorder treatment into primary care settings
- **After France took similar action to make buprenorphine available without a specialized waiver, opioid overdose deaths declined by 79 percent over a four-year period**

Congress can help stop this crisis!

- After nearly 20 years of safe treatment, there is no good reason to maintain a separate, more burdensome regulatory regime restricting access to safe, proven addiction treatments including buprenorphine
- Practitioners are already required to obtain a license to prescribe controlled substances and meet any state-level requirements to prescribe buprenorphine
- The additional waiver requirement reflects a longstanding stigma around substance use treatment and sends a message to the medical community that they lack the knowledge or ability to effectively treat a patient with substance use disorder
- [New York, North Carolina, New Mexico, Indiana](#) and others have called for the removal of the federal buprenorphine waiver requirement

The Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act

- Eliminates the redundant, outdated requirement that practitioners apply for a separate waiver through the DEA to prescribe buprenorphine for substance use disorder treatment
- Requires the Secretary of HHS to conduct a national campaign to educate practitioners about the change in law and encouraging providers to integrate substance use treatment into their practices

Connect with Representative Tonko on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @RepPaulTonko