

THE NEW ENGLAND COUNCIL

April 17, 2024

Dear New England Senate Delegation:

I write to you today in support of the reauthorization of S. 3393 and H.R. 4531, the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention That Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act (SUPPORT Act). As you may know, the New England Council is a non-partisan alliance of businesses, academic and health institutions, and public and private organizations throughout New England. Our mission is to promote economic growth and a high quality of life in the region, and it is with that background that I urge you to consider the SUPPORT Act, a key component in addressing the mental and physical challenges facing our region.

The SUPPORT Act of 2018 changed the federal approach to treating addiction. However, according to the National Institute of Drug Abuse and the National Health Council, drug-involved overdose deaths have risen sharply since 2019. When the SUPPORT Act was first signed into law, overdose deaths involving opioids were just under 50,000 in 2018. However, in 2020, this statistic rose to 68,630 deaths and to 80,411 deaths in 2021¹. Of the 106,000 total overdose deaths in 2021, 70,601 could be attributed to fentanyl.

The escalation in the crisis, especially around fentanyl, has drawn considerable congressional attention, and we applaud the work of both Chambers this past year and are supportive of the overlapping provisions for the SUPPORT Act reauthorization reported out by the HELP Committee and passed by the House of Representatives this past December. Reauthorizing and expanding upon the SUPPORT Act is essential for bolstering the comprehensive federal response to the opioid crisis. By reauthorizing and expanding upon the SUPPORT Act, Congress can remove barriers to lifesaving treatment for Americans at greatest risk of fatal overdose, including individuals who are incarcerated and those exposed to fentanyl.

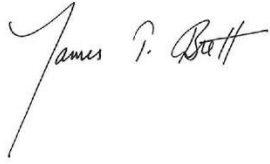
The New England Council believes that the SUPPORT Act has played a pivotal role in addressing public health across the region and the country, and we encourage you and your colleagues to support the reauthorization of this significant legislation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Sean Malone on my staff at smalone@newenglandcouncil.com.

Sincerely,

¹ <https://nationalhealthcouncil.org/blog/support-act-reauthorization/>

The New England Council

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James T. Brett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

James T. Brett
President & CEO
The New England Council

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