

January 26, 2015

The Honorable Tom Marino  
United States House of Representatives  
410 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn  
United States House of Representatives  
217 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter Welch  
United States House of Representatives  
2303 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Judy Chu  
United States House of Representatives  
1520 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Marino, Blackburn, Welch and Chu:

On behalf of the patient and health professional groups listed below we would like to express our support for the Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2015 (H.R. 471). We appreciate your leadership and commitment to combating the inappropriate use of prescription medicines. Your legislation will help improve the balance between effective enforcement against prescription drug diversion and abuse, while ensuring patients who are appropriately prescribed medications continue to have access to their treatments.

As patient advocacy and health professional organizations, we are committed to combating illegal use of prescription drugs. Millions of Americans depend on prescription drugs to treat and cure illness, alleviate pain, and improve quality of life, yet prescription drug abuse remains a persistent problem that requires collaboration from all those with a stake in improving patient care and protecting against abuse. In considering the burden on patients, it is important to remember that the vast majority of patients who use prescription drugs do so legitimately to address a variety of health issues. Efforts to prevent drug abuse should also consider legitimate users so that actions do not impede patient access or lessen the effectiveness of patient care.

Federal agencies, law enforcement, pharmaceutical industry participants and prescribers each play a role in working diligently to prevent drug abuse and diversion. However, it is also imperative that legitimate patients are able to obtain their prescriptions without disruption. Your legislation addresses both goals by fostering greater collaboration, communication and transparency between industry stakeholders and regulators, leading to more effective efforts to combat abuse while protecting patients. We commend you for including a report to congress, which will illuminate the issue and ultimately benefit patient care. Including patient advocacy groups in the process will ensure those involved in patient care will be able to identify challenges and will emphasize appropriate and workable policy approaches to preventing diversion and abuse of controlled substances.

We commend you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Patient Access  
American Academy of Pain Management  
American Pharmacists Association  
American Society of Consultant Pharmacists  
American Society for Pain Management Nursing  
Center for Lawful Access and Abuse Deterrence  
Citizen Advocacy Center  
Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.  
Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association  
Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association  
National Association of Chain Drug Stores  
National Community Pharmacists Association  
National Fibromyalgia & Chronic Pain Association  
The Pain Community  
Pain Connection-Chronic Pain Outreach Center, Inc.  
Project Lazarus  
Save Our Society From Drugs  
U.S. Pain Foundation  
Virginia Cancer Pain Initiative