



Chairman Hal Rogers

House Committee on Appropriations

**FY 2017 Budget Hearing:
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
March 2, 2016
Opening Statement As Prepared**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for yielding. I, too, welcome Acting Administrator Enomoto to your first hearing before the Committee to discuss SAMHSA's budget request for Fiscal Year 2017.

I will be brief in my remarks. I am pleased that the President's budget recognizes the scope of opioid abuse in America and prioritizes treatment for those suffering from addiction. Unquestionably, we need more treatment options for people in need. Of the 2.5 million Americans who need treatment for opioid use disorders, less than 1 million are receiving it. That is a serious problem, and we need to do something about it. I am pleased that you will be discussing these important issues at the National Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit in Atlanta during the week after Easter.

However, it is important to note that there is no "one size, fits all" approach to treatment. We need to foster a regimen which tailors and personalizes a patient's treatment to his or her individual needs, and certainly medication assisted treatment (MAT) programs are a piece of the puzzle. If provided under the care and supervision of a medical professional trained in addiction, MAT can help a patient turn his or her life around and move forward in a positive direction.

This Committee has repeatedly communicated to SAMHSA that there is a full spectrum of options that we ought to be considering for every patient who walks through the door looking for help, and doctors ought to be trained in all of them to decide what is best for the patient. Unfortunately, I am not sure the message has been received. If the Chairman will indulge me, I would like to ask a few brief questions.

- Buprenorphine has been a useful tool for many doctors, but it seems that HHS and SAMHSA have held this drug up as a silver bullet – focusing on prescribing caps and access to it. However, there are also non-opioid medications available to treat patients struggling with addiction, and our Committee has encouraged you to look at these products as another tool in the toolbox. Are you making progress?
- Medication-assisted therapies may not work for everyone, so what will you do to ensure that faith- and community-based abstinence treatment programs have a space in the big picture, as well?
- I have spoken on a number of occasions with Secretary Burwell about the importance of access to treatment, particularly in rural communities. How would your budget proposal address the shortfall of residential facilities in rural areas?

Thank you for your time today, and I look forward to seeing you in Atlanta.

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