

Rep. Ryan Costello
Member Day Opioid Remarks
October 11, 2017

In speaking with constituents about the opioid epidemic, I have learned firsthand the impact this epidemic is having on our communities in Pennsylvania – it is affecting families and individuals of all ages, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Throughout my Congressional district and throughout this nation, there are parents, teachers, athletes, doctors, teenagers, and seniors struggling with addiction - a disease that truly knows no boundaries when it comes to who it affects.

These families, these individuals are why we must continue our work to pass legislation like the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, and the 21st Century Cures Act – two pieces of legislation I supported that are both now law. These bipartisan bills are helping our communities through increasing access to treatment, and expanding prevention, education, and intervention efforts.

In the communities I represent, a recurring sentiment I've heard was, "you wouldn't believe how much money we've spent."

The cost of treatment and recovery is crippling, even for individuals who have insurance \$35,000 for a 30-day stay at a treatment center. \$10,000 for a 10-day detox. Hundreds of dollars spent on flights to recovery programs across the country.

Families are being forced to refinance their homes, parents are taking on second jobs, and retirees are re-entering the workforce to help pay for treatment for a family member struggling with addiction.

Those seeking help should not be faced with these insurmountable costs.

To help individuals provide financial assistance to family members struggling with addiction, I have added my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 1575, the Addiction Recovery through Family Health Accounts Act.

Under current law, individuals can only use funds in their Health Savings Account, Flexible Spending Account, or Health Reimbursement Arrangement to pay for addiction treatment for their spouse or dependents.

This bill would give individuals the option to use funds from these accounts to help family members receive drug treatment – a niece, a grandfather, a cousin, a grandchild's spouse, in-laws, etc.

This legislation is a step in the right direction in alleviating the financial burden of substance abuse treatment.

I am proud of the work we have done in this Committee to help those facing this epidemic, and I am committed to continuing this critical work