

**Testimony of Chairman Bob Goodlatte
E&C Member Day on Opioids
October 11, 2017**

Chairman Walden & Ranking Member Pallone, thank you for the opportunity to testify about the opioid crisis in America. This crisis affects Americans across all socioeconomic levels in all regions of the country – including in my home district in Virginia – and has rightfully gained the attention of Congress.

According to the Northern Shenandoah Valley Substance Abuse Coalition, they have seen 11 opioid overdoses resulting in four deaths since September 20th – making 33 deaths in that region so far this year. Just recently, I met with a mother in Roanoke whose daughter is an opioid addict living on the streets. Her concern for her daughter was heartbreaking to hear.

Sadly, I know that every Member of Congress in this room has heard these stories of bright futures wasted away and lives taken too early. That is why we must act to provide more tools to help addicts reclaim and rebuild their lives, stop drug traffickers, and make our communities safer.

The Committee on Energy & Commerce, as well as the House Judiciary Committee, of which I currently serve as Chair, has been active in the fight to combat this epidemic. Since last year, the Judiciary Committee has passed seven legislative measures that address the multifaceted nature of the opioid epidemic.

Notably, the Judiciary and Energy & Commerce Committees worked collaboratively to see the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Reduction Act signed into law last year. This bipartisan legislation combats the opioid epidemic by establishing a streamlined, comprehensive opioid abuse grant program, including vital training and resources for first responders and law enforcement, criminal investigations for the unlawful distribution of opioids, drug and other alternative treatment courts, and residential substance abuse treatment.

We have also targeted those who traffic in opioids. The *Transnational Drug Trafficking Act*, which is now law, improves law enforcement's ability to pursue international drug manufacturers, brokers, and distributors in "source nations." Federal prosecutors can now use the important tools in that bill to pursue foreign drug traffickers who are poisoning American citizens.

Additionally, in July the Judiciary Committee reported favorably the *Stop the Importation and Trafficking of Synthetic Analogues Act*. It is an unfortunate reality that synthetic drug use and the opioid epidemic are inextricably linked. Heroin is regularly laced with synthetic drugs, such as fentanyl. This bill ensures that our laws keep pace with the creation of new, chemically-altered drugs and provides law enforcement with the tools needed to keep these drugs off of our streets.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify. My dedication to curtailing the opioid crisis is unwavering. I look forward to our continued work together to that end.

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