



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

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March 7, 2018

The Honorable Hal Rogers
U.S. House of Representatives
2406 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Katherine Clark
U.S. House of Representatives
1415 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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1895-1989

Re: H.R. 5102, Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Act of 2018

Dear Representatives Rogers and Clark,

On behalf of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), the nation's oldest and largest medical specialty society representing more than 5,100 physicians and allied health professionals who specialize in the treatment of addiction, I am writing to offer our support for your bill, the Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Act of 2018.

The current addiction treatment gap will never be closed with the current addiction treatment workforce. There are simply too few physicians and other clinicians with the requisite knowledge to meet the needs of the estimated 20.1 million Americans suffering from untreated substance use disorders. To make a meaningful and sustainable impact on the current opioid overdose epidemic, and to stave off future epidemics related to other addictive substances such as cocaine, benzodiazepines or methamphetamine, it is imperative that our country make strategic investments to incentivize clinicians to work in programs and practices that specialize in the treatment of substance use disorder and addiction.

The Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Act would create a more robust treatment workforce by helping participants who pursue full-time substance use disorder treatment jobs in high-need geographic areas repay their student loans. ASAM supports the goals of your bill and its efforts to address the opioid crisis by incentivizing physicians and other clinicians to work in substance use disorder treatment programs and practices.

11400 Rockville Pike Suite 200 Rockville, MD 20852

Phone: 301-656-3920 | Fax: 301.656.3815

www.ASAM.org

Thank you for your leadership in introducing this important legislation, and we look forward to working with you to secure its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly J. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "K" and a distinct "J" and "C".

Kelly J. Clark, MD, MBA, DFASAM
President, American Society of Addiction Medicine