



Your Liver. Your Life.

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March 19, 2018

The Honorable Greg Walden  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2322A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Walden and Ranking Member Pallone,

I write today on behalf of the American Liver Foundation (ALF) in support of the *Eliminating Opioid Related Infectious Diseases Act* led by Congressman Leonard Lance. This legislation addresses a significant and urgent public health crisis. It is our hope that the Energy & Commerce Committee will work with all necessary haste to authorize the additional programs and resources called for by the bill.

ALF was created in 1976 by the American Association for the Study of Liver Disease (AASLD). This organization of scientists and healthcare professionals was concerned with the rising incidence of liver disease and the lack of awareness among both the general public and the medical community. The mission, the programs and the services provided by American Liver Foundation complement the great work of AASLD. American Liver Foundation makes a measurable difference in the fight against liver disease by providing financial support for medical research, education for medical professionals, and advocacy and information for patients and their families, and by creating public awareness campaigns about liver wellness and disease prevention.

ALF is encouraged to see that Congress is beginning to address what the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has dubbed a “dual epidemic” at the nexus of the opioid crisis and the spike in rates of infectious diseases. The increase in rates of hepatitis and HIV/AIDS in communities ravaged by opioids is alarmingly high. Further, impacted individuals within this new wave of infections tend to be younger, not traditionally screened for hepatitis and HIV/AIDS, and unaware of their health status. If we do not act now to authorize dedicated resources and relevant activities, there will be worsening public health consequences as well as significant compounding healthcare costs. Moreover, research suggests that awareness of one’s health status is a key factor in reducing or eliminating opioid abuse moving forward.

Thank you for considering this timely and essential legislation. Please consider ALF a resource if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Tom Nealon  
CEO

American Liver Foundation