

March 16, 2018

Congressman Leonard Lance
2352 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Lance:

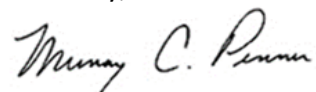
On behalf of NASTAD (the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors), I am writing to offer our support for the "Eliminating Opioid Related Infectious Disease Act of 2018." NASTAD represents public health officials in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, seven local jurisdictions receiving direct funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the U.S. Pacific Island jurisdictions. This legislation is a critical first step in addressing the increase in hepatitis C and B and HIV infections related to the nation's ongoing opioid epidemic.

The Eliminating Opioid Related Infectious Disease Act focuses resources on assisting States and other partners in identifying and investigating cases of hepatitis and HIV stemming from drug use. Increasing efforts to ensure individuals who inject drugs know that they are at heightened risk of acquiring certain infectious diseases and linking them to appropriate counseling, testing and treatment services are key interventions needed to stem the tide of increasing new infections.

Health department HIV and viral hepatitis programs continue to develop innovative and expanded programs to address the health needs of individuals who inject drugs and are in desperate need of resources to assist with increasing hepatitis C infections.

Thank you very much for your continued commitment to addressing the infectious disease consequences of the opioid epidemic.

Sincerely,



Murray C. Penner
Executive Director

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