

Shatterproof Statement for the Record
U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee
Hearing on “An Epidemic within a Pandemic: Understanding Substance Use and Misuse in
America”
April 14, 2021

Shatterproof is pleased to submit a statement in support of the Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act of 2021 (H.R. 2067) and the Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment (MAT) Act of 2021 (H.R. 1384), which are among the bills before the Health Subcommittee. Shatterproof applauds the Subcommittee’s recognition that our nation has witnessed a historically high number of overdose deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic. Congress must take swift, bipartisan action to advance policy changes that will reverse the opioid epidemic and restore the gains made in the fight against this crisis. Among these changes, ensuring that prescribers of controlled substances have training in addiction treatment and expanding access to buprenorphine to treat substance use disorder (SUD) are essential to preventing additional loss of life.

The MATE Act of 2021 would ensure that Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)-licensed prescribers have a baseline level of knowledge of how to treat and manage patients with SUD. The legislation would help train prescribers to use evidence-based approaches, including medications for addiction treatment (MAT), to care for patients. The legislation requires prescribers to attest on their application for a DEA license that they have completed at least 8 hours of education on treating and managing patients with SUD. The MATE Act of 2021 will help normalize addiction medicine and reduce the stigma that undermines the national response to the addiction and overdose crisis.

While more than 21 million Americans needed treatment for SUD in 2019, only 4.2 million reported receiving any form of SUD care.¹ Despite the effectiveness of MAT, it is vastly underused. One obstacle is that less than 6 percent of health care providers in the U.S. have obtained the required X-waiver training to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder (OUD). The MAT Act of 2021 would end the X-waiver requirement and significantly expand access to the gold standard for addiction treatment. Removing barriers to buprenorphine saves lives; within three years of similarly deregulating buprenorphine prescribing requirements, France experienced a 79 percent decline in fatal overdoses.

As the addiction and overdose crisis continues to ravage communities across the country, Congress must expeditiously pass the MATE Act of 2021 (H.R. 2067) and the MAT Act of 2021 (H.R. 1384).

About Shatterproof: Shatterproof is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reversing the addiction crisis in the United States. Shatterproof harnesses the models of business, the rigor of science and the power of a national movement to create change and save lives through three

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), *Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, (<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29393/2019NSDUHFFRPDFWHTML/2019NSDUHFFR1PDFW090120.pdf>) (accessed Apr. 13, 2021).

pillars of work: revolutionizing the addiction treatment system, breaking down addiction-related stigmas and supporting and empowering our communities. To learn more visit www.Shatterproof.org.