

October 9, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leaders Jeffries, Schumer, and McConnell:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write to express our strong support for the *Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT) for Patients and Communities Reauthorization Act* (H.R. 4531 / S. 3393), which includes a technical fix to ensure trained family physicians, general dentists, podiatrists, and optometrists can continue to provide necessary care, including substance use disorder (SUD) treatment.

Among the many provisions we support, both versions of the legislation include a minor technical fix to ensure that our members can continue to provide necessary care, including SUD treatment. The *Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act*, passed as part of the *Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) of 2023*, included a new requirement that prescribers of controlled substances in schedules II, III, IV, and V complete a one-time eight-hour training before registering or renewing their registration with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Due to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and DEA electing not to proceed with statutorily authorized rulemaking, our organizations are not able to provide this mandated continuing education. This has led to many clinicians across the country having to retake duplicative trainings that are not tailored specifically for their specialty and patient population.

The legislative fix (Section 205 in H.R. 531 and Section 403 in S. 3393) makes a critical technical fix that ensures that our members are compliant with this requirement when they complete appropriate training for their specialty and patient population each year and helps prevent patients from experiencing potential disruptions in their access to ongoing or new care.

Therefore, we strongly urge Congress to include this critical language in any potential legislation that moves before the end of 2024. We are sincerely grateful for your bipartisan leadership on these issues, and we look forward to passage of the *SUPPORT Reauthorization Act* to ensure that our members can continue to provide timely, uninterrupted treatment to their patients, including those with SUD. Thank you again for considering our request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact David Tully at dtully@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Optometric Association
American Podiatric Medical Association