



Association for Behavioral  
Health and Wellness

*Advancing benefits and services  
in mental health, substance use  
and behavior change.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Industry Group Applauds Senate HELP Committee on Opioid Package and Urges Inclusion of the Protecting Jessica Grubb's Legacy Act**

**Washington, DC (April 5, 2018)** – The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for over 175 million people, today issued the following statement in response to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions' (HELP) discussion draft bill aimed at combating the opioid epidemic.

ABHW and its members are encouraged by the Committee's bipartisan discussion draft bill and their efforts to address the unprecedented opioid epidemic here in the United States. We appreciate the inclusion of the Confidentiality of Substance Use Disorder Records provision (To identify model training programs on how to protect and appropriately disclose confidential substance use disorder medical records for health care providers, patients, and their families) and are hopeful it will expand to include the language in S. 1850 that amends 42 CFR Part 2 and allows for disclosures of substance use disorder records to carry out safe and coordinated treatment, payment, and health care operations.

We also are pleased to see the Committee stand firm on such provisions as:

- Recovery Housing Best Practices – Require HHS to issue best practices for entities operating recovery housing facilities. Identify or facilitate the development of best practices, which may include model laws for implementing standards for operating recovery housing;
- Special Registration for Telemedicine – Clarify DEA's ability to develop regulation to allow qualified providers to prescribe controlled substances in limited circumstances via telemedicine; and
- State Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMP) – Encourage states to share PDMP data with one another, in an effort to streamline federal requirements for PDMPs so doctors and pharmacies can know if patients have a history of substance use and be able to provide quality treatment accordingly. ABHW and its member would like to see the PDMP language also include health plan access to the data.

ABHW Comments to the President's Commission on Combatting Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis  
Senate Health Committee: The Opioid Crisis Response Act 2018

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ABHW is the leading health plan association working to improve access and quality of care for mental health and substance use disorders. ABHW's members include national and regional health plans who care for more than 175 million people. Together we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and addiction care.



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Member companies - Aetna Behavioral Health, Anthem, Beacon Health Options, Centene Corporation, Cigna, New Directions Behavioral Health, Optum, and PerformCare.