



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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10 February 2016

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman and Senator Leahy,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise the Committee on the Judiciary that we support S. 524, the "Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act," which contains many provisions designed to tackle the dangerous rise in use of heroin and abuse of opioids in our country.

From 2001 to 2013 there was a fivefold increase in the amount of overdose deaths due to heroin, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). Public awareness of these drugs is the first step to stop the ongoing abuse of heroin and opioids in this country. The legislation provides treatment for those caught in the clutches of addiction or who also suffer from mental illness and also provides law enforcement with necessary tools to prevent heroin and opioid deaths by assisting agencies in acquiring and deploying naloxone which can reverse the effects of an overdose.

Law enforcement officers are almost always the first on the scene—even before the paramedics arrive. In these life and death situations, our officers are not looking to make an arrest, but to save a life. Many States and jurisdictions have successfully equipped their officers with this life-saving drug, trained them to recognize the symptoms of an overdose, and administer it on the scene. We believe that S. 524 will help expand the use of naloxone and give us one more tool to reduce the deaths of this epidemic. While this legislation does nothing to address the failure of elected officials at every level to address the total collapse of the public/mental health system in the United States, it is certainly an important step towards stemming the loss of the life which results in large part from that failure.

Too many lives have been lost to these drugs, and too many families have been torn apart and, so, on behalf of more than the 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I urge the Committee to favorably report this legislation. Thank you as always for your leadership and, please, if I can be of assistance, please contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

Chuck Canterbury
National President

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