

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 29, 2015

For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

Page 1 of 2

AG STRANGE, OTHER ATTORNEYS GENERAL URGE PASSAGE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 2015 TO ADDRESS NATIONWIDE EPIDEMIC OF HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION AND ABUSE

(MONTGOMERY) – Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange and Attorneys General from 37 states plus the District of Columbia today sent a letter to the leadership of the Committee on the Judiciary for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives urging passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015 (S. 524/HR 953).

The letter comes amid continued state efforts to address the epidemic of heroin and opioid-based painkiller abuse and addiction and its devastating effect on public health and safety in communities. In Alabama today, Attorney General Strange hosted the 2015 Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Summit, training approximately 700 officers from across the state in ways to fight drug abuse through education and enforcement methods.

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act would provide states with the necessary tools to more effectively confront the growing challenge of heroin and opioid abuse and addiction.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdoses now surpass automobile accidents as the leading cause of injury-related death for Americans between the ages of 25 and 64. More than 100 Americans die as a result of overdose in this country every day – more than half of them caused by prescription drugs or heroin.

“Strong law enforcement is needed to attack the scourge of illegal drugs upon our society, but we also must address the reality of addiction and make treatment more effective and more available,” said Attorney General Strange. “The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act provides a nationwide plan to save lives, and we urge Congress to approve this important legislation.”

In their letter, the Attorneys General write, “Law enforcement has always been on the frontline when it comes to drug crises, but we cannot arrest ourselves out of this current epidemic. Research shows the best way to address this challenge is through a strategy that includes prevention, law enforcement, reduction of overdose deaths, evidence-based treatment, and support for those in, or seeking, recovery.”



501 Washington Avenue • Montgomery, AL 36104 • (334) 242-7300

www.ago.state.al.us

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2015 will:

- Expand prevention and educational efforts – particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations – to prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and to promote treatment and recovery;
- Expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives;
- Expand resources to identify and treat incarcerated individuals suffering from addiction disorders promptly by collaborating with criminal justice stakeholders and by providing evidence-based treatment;
- Expand disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of children and adolescents;
- Launch an evidence-based opioids and heroin treatment and intervention program to assist in treatment and recovery throughout the country; and
- Strengthen prescription drug-monitoring programs to help states monitor and track prescription drug diversion and to help at-risk individuals access services.