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HEALTHCARE

April 12, 2018

Senator Elizabeth Warren
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warren:

On behalf of the Association for Behavioral Healthcare (ABH), I am writing to express our strong support for *The Comprehensive Addiction Resources Emergency Act of 2018*. ABH and our members commend you for the introduction of this bold legislation to initiate a strong, comprehensive national response to the opioid epidemic ravaging Massachusetts and other parts of our nation.

ABH is a Massachusetts-based, statewide association representing more than eighty community-based mental health and addiction treatment provider organizations. Our members are the primary providers of publicly-funded behavioral healthcare services in the Commonwealth, serving approximately 81,000 Massachusetts residents daily, 1.5 million residents annually, and employing over 46,500 people.

As you well know, Massachusetts and the United States are in the midst of an unprecedented opioid epidemic. 1,977 individuals died of opioid related deaths in 2017 in Massachusetts. Opioid related deaths in Massachusetts increased by 475% from 2000 - 2016. Every day ABH member organizations see more demand for treatment than they have capacity to provide. This is in large part due to insufficient resources given the enormous scope of the epidemic.

Additional federal funding and support is essential in addressing the crisis. We strongly support the comprehensive approach to treatment as proposed by your legislation. Individuals with addiction disorders need access to treatment as well as other community supports. Recovery is a lifelong process and this legislation will allow individuals to access the services they need.

ABH is pleased to offer our strong support for this important piece of legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 508-647-8385, x-11 or at vdigravio@abhmass.org if ABH or our members can provide further support to you as you pursue passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicker V. DiGravio III".

Vicker V. DiGravio III
President/CEO