



4/17/2018

The Honorable Elijah Cummings
United States House of Representatives
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senate
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Harm Reduction Coalition strongly endorses the *"Comprehensive Opioid Resources Emergency Act of 2018"* introduced by Rep. Elijah Cummings and Sen. Elizabeth Warren. We support efforts by both offices to scale up our federal public health responses to match the scope of the nation's opioid crisis, to provide desperately needed federal resources to communities at greatest need, to center the voices of those impacted by the crisis, and the inclusion of harm reduction programs as a core pillar of the Continuum of Care for people impacted by the opioid crisis.

We applaud the recognition that comprehensive supportive services – including harm reduction services, outreach services, housing referral services, and other supportive services - must play a central role alongside core medical and behavioral health services in our collective response to this crisis, and the inclusion of adequate funding to support community-based programs which provide these services. Community-based harm reduction programs serve a vital role as platforms for linkage and engagement into broader healthcare systems for people who use drugs. These programs are essential components of any truly comprehensive Continuum of Care and must be scaled up alongside our medical and treatment infrastructure if we are to reduce the burden of opioid overdoses within our communities.

The Harm Reduction Coalition also commends the recognition that this crisis will require sustained, multi-year funding, and supports the commitment to authorized funding through fiscal year 2023. This commitment will allow local jurisdictions make the long-term investments in community based, medical, and behavioral health infrastructure needed to adequately respond to the opioid crisis.

Sincerely,

Kiefer Paterson,
Government Relations Manager
Harm Reduction Coalition