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| May 22, 2018 | 202-224-6244 |

**Heller Introduces Six Bills to Help States Fight the Opioid Epidemic**

**WASHINGTON**– U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV), a member of the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, today helped introduce six bipartisan proposals aimed at fighting Nevada’s opioid epidemic, including three proposals he authored.

Specifically, Heller’s *Assessing Barriers to Opioid Use Disorder Treatment* *Act* would help support states in removing barriers to doctors’ and pharmacists’ provision of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) in Medicaid. Heller also authored the *Enhancing Patient Access to Non-Opioid Treatment Options*, which would clarify that states can pursue non-opioid related prescribing, such as physical therapy. Finally, Heller’s *Securing Flexibility to Treat Substance Use Disorders Act* would help ensure that states can use managed care to cover inpatient care in Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMD) for 15 days.

Additionally, Heller helped introduce three other bipartisan proposals with his colleagues: *theMedication-Assisted Treatment Improvement Act*, which ensures that there is no timeline on addiction recovery for Medicaid patients; *the Help for Moms and Babies Act,* which provides protection for pregnant women who have a substance abuse disorder and are seeking treatment within IMDs; and the *Caring Recovery for Infants and Babies Act* to help ensure that newborns suffering from withdrawal have access to treatment.

“There should be no stone unturned when it comes to finding a solution to curbing Nevada’s drug crisis,” **said Heller.** “As patient advocates, medical professionals, and other stakeholders continue working to fight the opioid epidemic, Congress has a role to play in assisting these struggling communities. My bills represent a few critical steps Congress can take to help states address this crisis and improve patient access to treatment. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Finance Committee to pass these proposals.”

**Heller’s recent history of combating Nevada’s drug epidemic:**

* Heller [cosponsored the Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=3F004D3E-3581-408F-A143-B62C16AE9B27), legislation to improve the federal response to the nation’s drug epidemic. In April, the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) [unanimously passed this legislation](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=5FFDBCE4-F8FD-474E-AA78-44EACCC31B1F).
* In April, [Heller introduced the Opioid Addiction Action Plan Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=6E40394B-BCF7-4FBB-972C-C4DC3C245D6B), bipartisan legislation that requires the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to develop a plan by January 1, 2019, to prevent opioid addiction and increase access to medication-assisted treatment.
* In April, Hellerintroduced the Informing Seniors about Opioids Act alongside Senator Nelson (D-FL) to update the “Medicare and You” handbook to include information about opioid use, pain management, and alternative pain management treatments.
* In March, Heller [helped introduce a bill to strengthen penalties for fentanyl](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/3/heller-helps-introduce-bill-to-crack-down-on-fentanyl-traffickers) distribution and trafficking to ensure they better reflect the serious nature of the crime.
* In February, Heller joined Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO) in introducing the [Every Prescription Conveyed Securely (EPCS) Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/2/heller-bennet-introduce-bill-to-combat-opioid-crisis), a bipartisan bill that requires electronic prescriptions for controlled substances under Medicare.

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