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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:**Megan Taylor |
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**Heller, Menendez, Isakson Introduce the Opioid Addiction Action Plan Act**

**WASHINGTON**- U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), and Johnny Isakson (R-GA) today introduced the Opioid Addiction Action Plan Act,bipartisanlegislation 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.

Under the proposal, the secretary of HHS will submit a report to Congress involving recommendations on data collection and improvements to Medicare and Medicaid coverage and reimbursement of medication-assisted treatment. HHS will also consider ways to improve provider education on treatments for chronic pain and addiction, and methods to expand access to treatment for rural and medically-underserved communities.

The legislation also directs HHS to identify FDA-approved technologies that are non-opioid treatments for acute and chronic pain management, technologies that monitor withdrawal and prevent overdose, and technologies that treat substance use disorder and opioid use disorder.

“In 2016, more than 600 people died in the state of Nevada as a result of drug overdose. Too many American families have been impacted by the opioid epidemic, which has rocked our communities in Nevada and around the country. That’s why I’m proud to introduce bipartisan, bicameral legislation with Senators Bob Menendez and Johnny Isakson to help our friends, family members, and loved ones battling addiction,”**said Heller.**“I thank Congressman Kinzinger for his leadership in the House on this bill, and look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Opioid Addiction Action Plan Act.”

“The opioid crisis impacts every community in our nation. It affects people from every walk of life, and the problem continues to grow,” **said Sen. Menendez.** “We need to change the way Medicare and Medicaid approach pain management and addiction treatment. By developing an Opioid Addiction Action Plan that focuses on improving access to substance abuse treatment and providing non-opioid pain management solutions, we can turn the tide of the opioid crisis.”

“It is time that we use every available resource to achieve a greater understanding of opioid addiction and how to promote recovery,” **said Isakson.** “The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services is a fully-engaged partner in the opioid action plan created by the *Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016* to combat the epidemic of heroin and prescription painkiller abuse across the country. This next step will help ensure that patients – especially those covered by Medicare and Medicaid – are able to access treatment, including non-opioid alternatives for pain management.”

Congressman Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) and Congresswoman Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY) earlier this week introduced H.R. 5590, companion legislation in U.S. House of Representatives.

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