

SEC. 613. POLICY STATEMENT ON ADDRESSING THE OPIOID ABUSE EPIDEMIC.

(a) FINDINGS.—The House finds the following:

(1) Sixty-one percent of all drug overdose deaths in the United States were related to opioids in 2014, primarily prescription pain relievers and heroin. Prescription opioid overdose deaths have quadrupled since 1999, with 44 deaths every day.

(2) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has found that people in rural counties are almost twice as likely to overdose on prescription painkillers as those in large cities.

(3) One of the leading factors in the rise of opioid abuse is considered to be the ready availability of prescription painkillers: (A) From 1999 to 2013, the sale of prescription painkillers in the United States quadrupled. (B) In 2012, there were enough opioids prescribed for every adult in the United States to each have their own one month's supply. (C) Nearly 2 million Americans reported opioid abuse or dependency in 2013.

(4) According to the CDC, every day nearly 7,000 people are treated in emergency departments for using opioids in a manner other than as directed.

(5) Prescription opioid abuse is also associated with a rise in heroin use and overdoses: (A) From 2002 to 2013, heroin use in the United States nearly doubled, and heroin-related overdose deaths nearly quadrupled. (B) According to the CDC, "past misuse of prescription opioids is the strongest risk factor for heroin initiation and use."

(b) POLICY ON OPIOID ABUSE.—It is the policy of this concurrent resolution that combating opioid abuse using available budgetary resources is a high priority to assist those who are suffering from this tragic epidemic. Congress, in a bipartisan manner, should examine the Federal response to the opioid abuse crisis and support essential activities, including rehabilitation, to reduce and prevent substance abuse.