



The Reentry Act

119th Congress

House Sponsors: Reps. Paul Tonko (D-NY), Mike Turner (R-OH), Brittany Pettersen (D-CO), and John Rutherford (R-FL)

America is in the grip of a devastating epidemic

- Overdose remains the leading cause of death for Americans aged 18-44
- National overdose deaths dropped in 2024, down from a peak of around 114,000 the previous 12 months. Despite this promising decline, **hundreds of Americans continue to die every day as a result of this crisis**
- This is a national emergency that demands immediate action

One vulnerable population is at the epicenter

- Individuals reentering society after incarceration are some **129 times more likely to die of a drug overdose in the first two weeks** after release vs. the general population
- U.S. jails and prisons have a higher rate of substance use disorder (SUD) sufferers:
 - **U.S. population:** 8 percent
 - **Federal prisons:** 32 percent
 - **State prisons:** 49 percent
- **Former inmates are uniquely vulnerable** due to reduced tolerance for opioids, lack of effective addiction treatment options while incarcerated, & poor care transitions back into the community

Congress Can Do Better!

- Medicaid is generally prohibited from paying for expenses incurred while a beneficiary is incarcerated, **even when an incarcerated individual remains Medicaid eligible**

The Reentry Act

- Restart benefits for Medicaid-eligible incarcerated individuals 30 days pre-release
- Makes it easier for states to **provide effective addiction treatment and services**, allowing for smoother transitions to community care and reducing risk of overdose deaths post-release
- **DOES NOT EXPAND MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY IN ANY WAY**

More than 130 organizations support the Reentry Act, including: *Addiction Policy Forum, American Civil Liberties Union, Alliance for Rights and Recovery, Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness, CADCA, Center for Justice and Human Dignity, Drug Policy Alliance, Gateway Alliance Project, HIV Medicine Association, HOPE for Prisoners, Legal Action Center, Mental Health America, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), National Nurses United, National Sheriffs Association, Overdose Prevention Initiative, The Justice Policy Institute, and dozens more*

This disease of despair deserves a strong response rooted in hope!

Connect with Congressman Paul Tonko on Facebook, X, Bluesky, or Instagram: @RepPaulTonko