

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG STRANGE PRAISES U.S. SENATE FOR PASSAGE OF COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange praised the U.S. Senate for its passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA). The legislation is designed to provide states with the necessary tools to more effectively confront the growing challenge of heroin and opioid abuse and addiction. CARA passed the U.S. Senate 94 to 1 on Thursday, and a companion bill awaits a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Attorney General Strange and Attorneys General from 37 states plus the District of Columbia sent letters in September of 2015 urging the judiciary committees of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives to pass CARA. In Alabama, the Attorney General's 2015 Law Enforcement Summit, which involved approximately 700 officers from across the state, focused on new ways to combat illegal drugs through education and enforcement methods.

"While stronger enforcement is needed to reduce the disastrous impact of illegal drugs upon our society, we must also address the reality of addiction including the availability of effective treatment," Attorney General Strange said. "The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act provides a nationwide plan to tackle drug addiction with the goal of saving lives. We are grateful to the Senate for its passage of this legislation and urge the U.S. House to give CARA swift approval."

The legislation includes provisions to:

- Expand prevention and educational efforts – particularly aimed at teens, parents and other caretakers, and aging populations – to prevent the abuse of opioids and heroin and to promote treatment and recovery;
- Expand the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help in the reversal of overdoses to save lives;
- Expand resources to identify and treat incarcerated individuals suffering from addiction disorders promptly by collaborating with criminal justice stakeholders and by providing evidence-based treatment;
- Expand disposal sites for unwanted prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of children and adolescents;
- Launch an evidence-based opioids and heroin treatment and intervention program to assist in treatment and recovery throughout the country; and
- Strengthen prescription drug-monitoring programs to help states monitor and track prescription drug diversion and to help at-risk individuals access services.

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