

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 23, 2019

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General
Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

In furtherance of Congressional oversight efforts, we write to request the Government Accountability Office conduct a review of the U.S. federal government's efforts to translate appropriated monies into grants related to fighting the opioid crisis that is ravaging our communities. Congress has authorized billions of dollars to address this crisis, but even we cannot adequately track where and how the funds were used in many cases. In the interest of ensuring that the funds are directed towards their intended purpose, providing a mechanism where Congress can "see" the development of grants and help direct their constituents to them, and stewarding taxpayer resources in an effective manner, we believe several recent opioid-related legislative packages should be carefully examined to track their destination, assess their impact, and inform our decisions about future efforts. Doing so can help us apply lessons learned to the nearly \$640 billion in grant funding across the federal government, and help to understand the tangible impact of these funds.

Funding for grants has been included in H.R. 1625, the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018* (P.L. 115-141); H.R. 6157, the *Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019* (P.L. 115-245); the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act of 2016 (P.L. 114-198); the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255); and the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act (P.L. 115-271). As part of its mission to lead public health efforts to reduce the effects of substance abuse, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is responsible for overseeing a significant portion of the grant funding provided through this legislation.

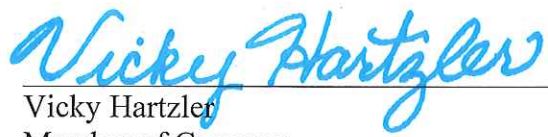
We request that GAO assess the information available regarding grant funding related to opioid crisis response efforts within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), with a priority on grant funding within SAMHSA. For the grant funding included in this review, please assess the following:

- (1) The information available regarding the status of grant funding, including how much grant funding has been appropriated for different purposes or activities; how much has been obligated; how much has been disbursed and the outlay rates; and how much funding remains unobligated and/or unspent. For appropriated funding that has not been obligated and/or spent, include available information on the reasons. Identify any appropriated funds that the agency does not have plans to obligate in the current or future fiscal years.

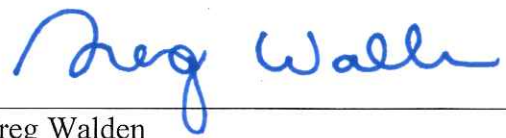
- (2) Agency processes to assess the results of grant funding.
- (3) Agency processes for communicating detailed information on the disbursement of grant funding to Congress and the public in a timely manner.
- (4) Agency processes for communicating with and soliciting proposals from potential grant recipients.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact Bryan McVae in Representative Hartzler's office at (202) 225-2876 or Jen Barblan with the Energy and Commerce Committee Republican staff at (202) 225-3641 should you have any questions.

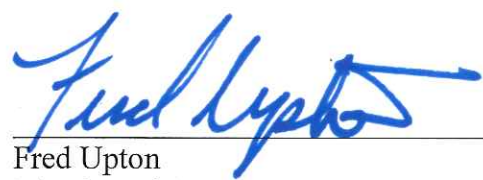
Sincerely,



Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress



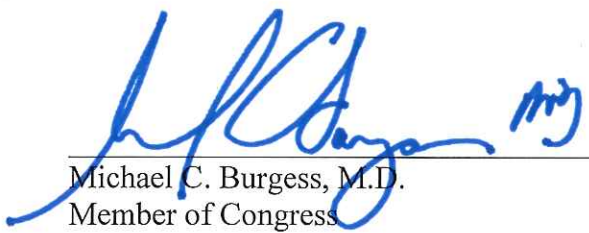
Greg Walden
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, House Committee on
Energy and Commerce



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



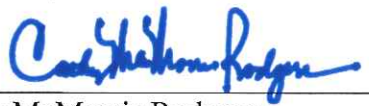
John Shimkus
Member of Congress



Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress



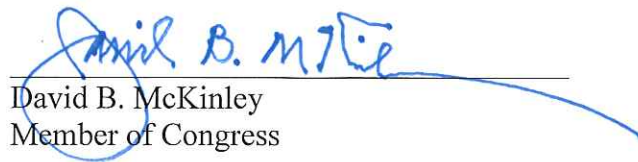
Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

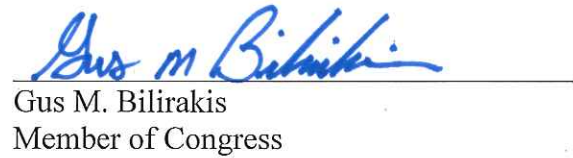


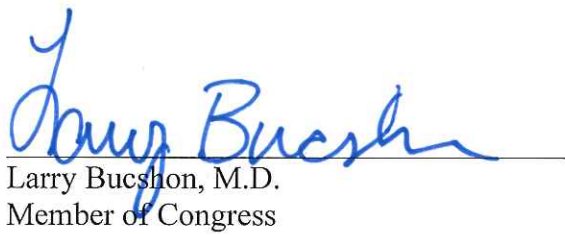
Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress

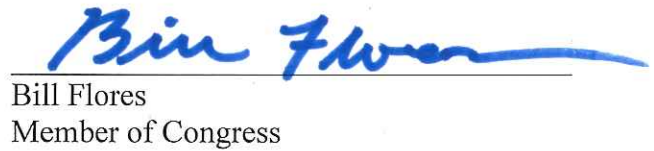

David B. McKinley
Member of Congress


Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress


Morgan H. Griffith
Member of Congress


Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress


Larry Bucshon, M.D.
Member of Congress

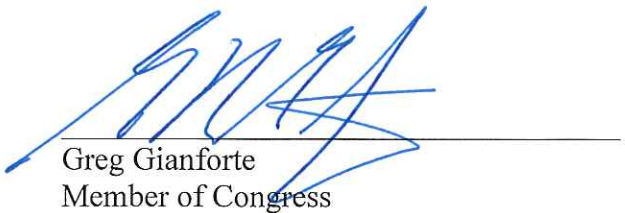

Bill Flores
Member of Congress


Susan Brooks
Member of Congress


Tim Walberg
Member of Congress


Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress


Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress


Greg Gianforte
Member of Congress