

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 18, 2023

The Honorable Anne Milgram
Administrator
U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration
8701 Morrissette Drive
Springfield, VA 22152

Dear Administrator Milgram:

We are writing to urge your prioritization of promulgating the final rule implementing the Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act of 2017 (PPAEMA).

PPAEMA was unanimously approved by both the House and Senate on a bipartisan basis and signed into law on November 17, 2017. It was strongly supported by 17 organizations representing numerous interests in emergency medical services (EMS) and emergency medicine. The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) promulgated a proposed rule on October 5, 2020. As we are now approaching almost six years since enactment of this critical law, it is essential the DEA finalize the regulation to provide clarity to the DEA offices and agents in the field and the entire EMS community.

PPAEMA constitutes a new statutory framework that allows EMS agencies, professionals and medical directors to fulfill their mission to save lives and alleviate pain while also enabling the DEA appropriate oversight to prevent drug diversion. More specifically, it explicitly permits medical directors to issue standing orders to enable EMS professionals to administer life-saving controlled substances to patients with emergency medical conditions. It also clarifies and codifies who is authorized to provide verbal orders for controlled substances. It provides the option for a single EMS agency registration as well as guidance and clarification regarding receipt, movement, and storage of controlled substances for the EMS agency. Most importantly, the law allows the EMS community to continue serving vulnerable emergency medical patients and providing the best possible care to those who need immediate life-saving and pain medications.

One of the critical reasons for establishing a new statutory framework for the use of controlled substances in EMS is to ensure a single set of rules for the EMS setting of care with consistent application of those rules across the country. Once the final rule is in place, it will provide the EMS community with a clear set of rules and DEA with auditable records and the necessary authority to prevent drug diversion. The long delay of the final rule is contributing to continued confusion and inconsistent application of the law among DEA offices across the country and impeding a functioning system for use of controlled substances in EMS that the Congress intended to modernize on a bipartisan basis.

We urge your swift adoption of the final rule and look forward to working with you in implementing this vital law that will enable numerous lives to be saved while preventing drug diversion. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Richard Hudson



Steve Cohen



Mike Ezell



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, JR.



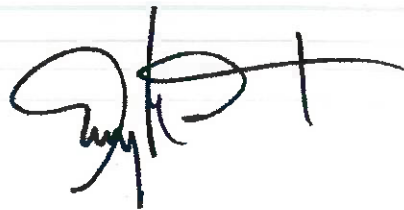
Jasmine Crockett



Wiley Nickel



Colin Allred



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