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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

AG Moody Urges Congress for More Treatment Options to Fight Opioid Crisis

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today urged Congress to remove federal barriers that are preventing health care providers from offering more treatment options for patients suffering from opioid use disorder. Attorney General Moody is joined by 39 other states' attorneys general in this nationwide effort to help expand treatment options for people fighting addiction.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Our country has been ravaged by the opioid crisis for years now, and here in Florida, we are working every day to combat opioid abuse. We need Congress to assist us in our fight by removing federal barriers that are preventing health care providers from offering more treatment options. This national crisis has ruined lives and torn apart families, and we need Congress to act with a sense of urgency to remove these opioid treatment barriers as soon as possible."

Attorney General Moody and a bipartisan coalition of attorneys general made the request today in a letter sent to the leadership in both houses of Congress. To read the letter, click here.

The letter outlines three areas that need to be addressed:

- Replacing the out-of-date privacy rules contained in 42 CFR Part 2 with the effective and more familiar privacy rules contained in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act;
- Passing HR 2482, the Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act, which eliminates unnecessary burdens on buprenorphine prescribing imposed by the Drug Addiction Treatment Act of 2000. Buprenorphine is one of three drugs used as part of Medication Assisted Treatment, the most effective treatment for opioid use disorder. Outdated and unnecessary federal requirements are discouraging doctors from prescribing this life-saving drug to patients; and
- Fully repealing the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Diseases exclusion. The IMD exclusion generally prohibits state Medicaid programs from receiving federal reimbursement for adults between 21 and 65 receiving mental health or substance use disorder treatment in a residential treatment facility with more than 16 beds.

Two million Americans struggle with opioid use disorder. Opioid use disorder is the physical and psychological reliance on opioids. Symptoms of opioid addiction include uncontrollable cravings for the drugs and the inability to control opioid use despite its negative impacts.

Florida Attorney General Moody is joined on the letter by attorneys general from Alaska,

Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakoda, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.