



May 6, 2021

House Appropriations Committee
House Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, and Education
c/o Rebecca Salay
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Ms. Rebecca Salay:

Thank you for your consideration of our Appropriations request for fiscal year 2022. I am reaching out as Founding President and Executive Director of Chronic Illness Advocacy & Awareness Group, a national nonprofit organization representing the interests of over 350,000,000 American citizens and their healthcare rights. .

Our Organization has been working with members of Congress and Senate regarding our concerns with the implementation of the National Pain Strategy and the studies being funded/managed by a number of Federal Agencies as well as the private-public partnerships with various nonprofits and for-profit entities.

Our research has uncovered a number of concerning activities taking place under the directive of the National Pain Strategy to include concerns of financial abuses, ethical/moral violations and potential illegal activities being conducted by a number of individuals and corporate entities appointed to do this work.

We ask the committee to please review both, [Violation of a Nation](#)(1) and [A Crisis Exploited](#) (2) research reports written by our organization that outline a number of concerning legal and regulatory changes that took place in the past decade.

Chronic Illness Advocacy & Awareness Group, Inc.
P.O. Box 371
Rutland, MA 01543
www.ciaag.net
Phone (774) 262-6671
Fax (508) 519-0383



As a result of our findings, we are asking the Appropriations Committee to allocate funding for the creation of an Oversight Committee, who would be responsible for:

- o Investigating the previous activities undertaken by the various federal agencies, public and private partnerships, their officers/directors, employees, members and other representatives, in regards to their participation in the planning of, the creation of, and the implementation/on-going activities of the National Pain Strategy, the Federal Pain Research Strategy and related activities, including but not limited to:
 - Agency Healthcare Quality & Research (AHRQ)
 - Centers of Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)
 - CMS (Centers of Medicare & Medicare)
 - Department of Defense (DoD)
 - Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
 - Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)
 - Food & Drug Administration (FDA)
 - Health & Human Services (HHS)
 - Interagency Pain Research Coordination Committee (IPRCC)
 - National Academies of Medicine (NAM)
 - National Institute of Health (NIH)
 - Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

- o Programs:
 - Healthy People 2010, Healthy People 2020, Healthy People 2030
 - HEAL Initiative

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- NAM: Action Collaborative on Countering the Opioid Epidemic
 - o Oversee ongoing and future activities related to the implementation of the National Pain Strategy. Including but not limited to: (1) Audit Opioid Task Forces, Committees and Work Groups composition to determine if any individuals with undue financial interest, bias and/or other conflicts of interest, were appointed to these positions. (2) Remove individuals from Opioid Task Forces, Committees and Work Groups that have undue financial interest, bias and/or other conflicts of interest. (3) Add individuals to the Federal Opioid Task Forces, Committees and Work Groups that represent the interests of patient rights, including but not limited to, right to proper pain management including opioid analgesics and other scheduled medications, as determined by the individuals' personal medical provider(s), patient privacy rights, and patient civil rights, personal autonomy/choice.
- Allocate funding to support *Impact Studies* on the outcomes of the resulting policy changes to determine whether or not the recommendations made in the National Pain Strategy and related agency work have had a negative impact on the public health and well-being; including but not limited to:
 - o Disability Rates
 - o Medical Error Rate
 - o Social Implications
 - o Suicide Rates and contributing factors

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The urgency of this request cannot be understated. While the National Pain Strategy and Federal Pain Research Strategy were created with the goal to improve public health and well-being by reducing the economic cost of pain while reducing the national rate of disability and overdose deaths; we as a nation have seen increases in all of these areas with sharp rises in overdoses and suicides since 2016.

The creation of an Oversight Committee and the funding of impact studies will help address a number of issues that are currently preventing our nation from reaching its goals in decreasing healthcare disparities while improving the public health and well-being.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to be added to the House Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2022. Our Executive Team is available upon request for any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Lauren Deluca, CPCU, API, AINS
Founding President & Executive Director
Chronic Illness Advocacy & Awareness Group

cc: Health, Education & Labor Committee

- (1) <https://uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/bf731b5a-9371-46c5-b2a4-4f798582e81c~110/original?tenant=vbu-digitalhttps://uploads.documents.cimpress.io/v1/uploads/c7c18e1c-2c3d-4ffd-b251-2ddba53a2d8b~110/original?tenant=vbu-digital>

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