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May 17, 2018

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
U.S. House of Representatives
514 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
231 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Carlos Curbelo
U.S. House of Representatives
1404 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Fitzpatrick, Congressman Thompson and Congressman Curbelo:

I am writing on behalf of the nation's Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) infrastructure to offer strong support for the REACH OUT Act (H.R. 5796) which creates an opioid prescriber technical assistance grant program, and to thank you for your efforts to establish these critical resources to address the opioid epidemic.

Our association, the American Health Quality Association (AHQA), represents Medicare-funded QIN-QIOs operating in every State, the District of Columbia and most U.S. Territories. Our organizations are committed to strengthening outreach and technical support aimed at reducing the frequency of opioid prescribing at the local level. We note that opioids now account for an astonishing 39 million Medicare Part D claims each year, at an estimated annual cost of \$2 billion. We also note data from the CDC indicating that an estimated 90,000 patients in the U.S. are currently at serious risk of harm from opioids.

The REACH OUT Act empowers QIOs to educate outlier prescribers regarding best practices for opioid and non-opioid pain management therapies, with the explicit goal of achieving demonstrable reductions in opioid prescribing. The legislation would build on special pilot projects QIN-QIOs have recently undertaken, under contract to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The bill would assure an increased, long-term commitment to addressing the nation's growing opioid crisis.

Over a 30 year history, the QIOs have demonstrated the ability to work locally with providers to improve quality. We are encouraged that this legislation would secure a sustained effort to provide critical technical assistance to reduce opioid utilization throughout the U.S.. The QIN-QIO network provides an experienced, mission-ready national infrastructure with a local presence that can implement this program in the most timely and cost-efficient manner.

Please let us know if there is additional information we can provide to you and to Congress in support of this timely and vitally-important legislative initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alison Teitelbaum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alison" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Teitelbaum".

Alison Teitelbaum, MS, MPH, CAE
Executive Director

CC: The Honorable Kevin Brady
The Honorable Greg Walden
The Honorable Richard Neal
The Honorable Frank Pallone