

EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER
FIRST DISTRICT OF GEORGIA

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE
VICE CHAIR, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT,
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
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November 13, 2023

The Honorable Bryan Steil
Chairman
Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Morelle
Ranking Member
Committee on House Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Brian P. Monahan, MD, MACP, FRCP
The Attending Physician
Congress of the United States
H-166, U.S Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chere Rexroat
Acting Architect of the Capitol
Architect of the Capitol
SB-16, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, Dr. Monahan, and Ms. Rexroat:

Given the alarming and preventable synthetic opioid overdose rates across the nation, I write to urge the Committee on House Administration, Office of Attending Physician, and Architect of the Capitol to stock FDA-approved opioid overdose reversal agents, such as naloxone and nalmefene, in every location where there is a defibrillator throughout the House office buildings. I urge you to give this immediate consideration given the scale of need at this moment.

Over the past several years, the United States has seen a historic rise in drug overdoses driven by an increased supply of synthetic opioids, such as illicit fentanyl analogs, coming across our southern border.¹ Under President Biden's failed leadership, the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) seized over 27,000 pounds of fentanyl in fiscal year 2023.² That's a 464% increase from fiscal year 2020.³ As a result, every state is a border state and illicit fentanyl poisonings are now the leading cause of death for Americans aged 18 to 49.⁴

In just the past two years, more than 200,000 Americans have tragically lost their lives to drug overdoses driven by synthetic opioids such as illicit fentanyl.⁵ Included in that number is a family from my district who lost their son, Wesley, to a fentanyl overdose at 22 years old. His mother writes, "My son was a victim of drug-induced homicide. He took one pill that ended up being pure fentanyl and died. He was poisoned because he trusted the wrong person and paid for it with his life." Sadly, not a day goes by without reading or hearing about stories of mothers,

¹ <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/drug-seizure-statistics>

² *ibidem*

³ *ibidem*

⁴ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/dea-fentanyl-failure/>

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

sons, sisters, brothers, cherished friends, and even babies losing their lives to a fentanyl poisoning. This crisis is devastating families across our nation and all of us are closer to this crisis than we may realize.

In Washington, D.C., the fentanyl overdose death rate is 48.8 per 100,000 residents – one of the highest rates in the nation.⁶ It's critical that the Committee on House Administration, Office of Attending Physician, and Architect of the Capitol lead by example and stock opioid overdose reversal agents in every location where there is a defibrillator throughout the House office buildings. As the synthetic opioid crisis continues to terrorize our country, there is no moral, medical, or safety-related reason for these life-saving overdose reversal agents to not be widely accessible for Members of Congress and staff. This is especially true since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the first over-the-counter naloxone nasal spray on March 9, 2023, and the product became available in late August.⁷

If used quickly enough, opioid overdose reversal agents can reverse the effects of fentanyl poisoning and can be the difference between life or death. Studies show that increasing access to these treatments can reduce mortality rates in communities by up to 46 percent.⁸ With your support, we can demonstrate our commitment to addressing the fentanyl crisis that is plaguing our country and save lives by increasing ready access to overdose reversal agents.

As evidenced by the overflow crowd at a naloxone training for congressional staff last September, there is demand for additional training and a desire among Members of Congress and staff alike to be better prepared.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and I stand ready to work with you to save lives.

Sincerely,



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress

⁶ <https://usafacts.org/articles/are-fentanyl-overdose-deaths-rising-in-the-us/#footnote-source-3>

⁷ <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-over-counter-naloxone-nasal-spray#:~:text=Today%2C%20the%20U.S.%20Food%20and,for%20use%20without%20a%20prescription.>

⁸ Walley A Y, et al. Opioid Overdose Rates and Implementation of Overdose Education and Nasal Naloxone Distribution in Massachusetts: Interrupted Time Series Analysis BMJ 2013; 346 :f174 doi:10.1136/bmj.f174