

Protecting Americans from Dangerous Opioids Act

The Problem

In 2021, more than 106,000 people died from prescription drug overdose. On average, 200 people died every day. Worse yet, this trend is moving in the wrong direction. Nearly 15% more people died in 2021 than died in 2020. We've lost more than 932,000 Americans to prescription opioid abuse since 1999. We must act to stop this epidemic.

One significant factor is the sheer number of opioid medications on the market. In fact, this bill finds that:

1. The United States makes up only 4.25 percent of the world's population, but consumes 80 percent of its opioid pain medications.
2. In 2020, health care providers wrote nearly 143 million prescriptions for painkillers. That's 43 prescriptions per 100 people.
3. The amount of prescription opioids sold in the United States has increased without a reported increase in pain. At the same time, overdose deaths involving opioids have quadrupled since 1999, with more than 932,000 people having died from a drug overdose.
4. According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, 80 percent of new heroin users abused prescription opioids before moving to heroin.

The Solution

The Protecting Americans from Dangerous Opioids Act would require the FDA to remove one opioid medication currently on the market for every new opioid medication that they approve. It instructs the FDA to prioritize revoking approval on non-abuse deterrent formulations and to consider the public health impact of the opioid being on the market.

This legislation is a common sense step that will help us get dangerous opioids off the market and keep the growth of this deadly industry in check.