

August 8, 2019

**The Honorable Lamar Alexander**

Chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**The Honorable Patty Murray**

Ranking Member, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Re: Organizations request hearing on pain management report**

Dear Senators Alexander and Murray,

We the undersigned organizations respectfully request that a congressional hearing be held on the recommendations recently released by the Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force (PMTF), overseen by the Department of Health and Human Services.

As you are aware, the task force was mandated by Congress in the first provision of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016. Recognizing that improving pain care is critical to solving the opioid crisis, Congress charged the group with identifying gaps and inconsistencies in pain management. A total of 29 experts from relevant disciplines- including both pain management and substance abuse-were appointed to the group. After a year of deliberation, public hearings, and careful review of current literature, the task force produced a final report with a series of comprehensive, common-sense recommendations.

The undersigned organizations endorse these recommendations, as they provide an essential blueprint for balancing the need to effectively manage pain and reduce the opioid epidemic. The recommendations in the final PMTF report have been widely applauded and were backed by a number of leading organizations, including the American Medical Association, the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons, Human Rights Watch, the Society of Anesthesiologists, and the American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians. Notably, the American Medical Association called the recommendations a "roadmap for future policy."

Specific recommendations of the task force include:

- Encouraging a multidisciplinary approach to pain care, with improved access to and coverage of multidisciplinary treatment options;
- Treating pain on an individualized basis, without one-size-fits-all rules or policies;
- Recognizing that stigma and a lack of public awareness create barriers to treatment.

Our organizations and provider groups recognize that the millions of adults and children currently living with a chronic condition which causes pain are a vulnerable population of individuals who are underserved and undertreated. The PMTF report recommendations, if implemented, would represent enormous progress toward effectively managing the complex and costly disease of chronic pain.

Congress mandated the task force and called for its recommendations; we collectively urge that Congress now prioritize reviewing and implementing these forward-thinking, proactive recommendations.

Respectively submitted,

Alliance for Balanced Pain Management  
American Chronic Pain Association

American Massage Therapy Association  
American Society for Pain Management Nursing  
Association of Migraine Disorders  
Center for Practical Bioethics  
Chronic Pain Research Alliance  
Clusterbusters  
Coalition for Headache and Migraine Patients (CHAMP)  
The Daily Headache  
Danielle Byron Henry Migraine Foundation  
Ehlers-Danlos Society  
For Grace: Women In Pain  
Headache and Migraine Policy Forum  
International Foundation for Autoimmune & Auto-inflammatory Arthritis (IFAA)  
Interstitial Cystitis Association  
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association  
MigraineDisease.org  
Miles for Migraine  
National Infusion Center Association (NICA)  
Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Association (RSDSA)  
Runnin for Research  
The Pain Community  
U.S. Pain Foundation

CC: The Honorable Senators:

Michael B. Enzi  
Richard Burr  
Johnny Isakson  
Rand Paul  
Susan Collins  
Bill Cassidy  
Pat Roberts  
Lisa Murkowski  
Tim Scott  
Mitt Romney  
Mike Braun  
Ranking Member Patty Murray  
Bernie Sanders  
Robert P. Casey  
Tammy Baldwin  
Christopher S. Murphy  
Elizabeth Warren  
Tim Kaine  
Maggie Hassan  
Tina Smith  
Doug Jones  
Jacky Rosen