

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 25, 2004

Join the Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to urge you to join the bipartisan *Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus*.

Chemical addiction destroys lives, families and communities. It is estimated that nearly one in ten Americans is suffering the ravages of chemical addiction, and 150,000 Americans died last year from this fatal disease.

Addiction is a private struggle with staggering public costs. According to a Brandeis University study, addiction costs the American economy \$400 billion each year in criminal justice costs, health care costs and lost productivity in the workplace.

At the same time, there is hope for those struggling with this disease through treatment and recovery. Clearly, treatment saves lives. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), treatment of addiction is as successful as treatment of other chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension and asthma.

Expanding access to treatment is not only the right thing to do -- it is also the cost-effective thing to do. According to the NIDA, every dollar spent on treatment saves \$7 in criminal justice costs. If savings in health care costs are added, savings from treatment exceed costs by a 12 to 1 ratio. A California study found that state-wide emergency room admissions dropped by one-third after treatment, and crime declined by two-thirds after treatment.

The Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus will examine the whole continuum of issues concerning chemical addiction and advance an agenda to promote solutions to these problems.

If you would like to join this caucus or have any questions, please contact Karin Hope (Rep. Ramstad, X5-2871) or Rachael Bornstein (Rep. Kennedy, X5-4911).



JIM RAMSTAD
Co-Chair
Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus

Sincerely,



PATRICK J. KENNEDY
Co-Chair
Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus