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The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warren,

On behalf of the 25,000 physicians, residents, and medical students of the Massachusetts Medical Society, I am writing to renew our support for the Comprehensive Addiction Resources Emergency (CARE) Act. This legislation, which is modeled on the successful Ryan White Act, will provide \$125 billion in funding to federal, state, local, and tribal governments over 10 years to invest in substance use disorder treatment, research, and prevention. This bill would give local decision-makers the support they need to provide effective prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts for those who are most in need. The bill also authorizes critical funding for federal research into developing additional evidence-based methods for preventing substance use disorder as well as funds to increase the health care workforce trained to help these patients.

Fighting the opioid misuse and substance use disorder crisis is one of the Massachusetts Medical Society's top public health priorities. The CARE Act is a well-designed bill that will provide a comprehensive array of services to those who are most at risk. This legislation is particularly important now, as the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated our nation's struggle with substance use disorder, a chronic illness that continues to take lives, destroy families and communities, and is disproportionately cruel and deadly to underserved populations. Providing ample and sustainable funding for resources, such as expanded access to treatment at the local level as outlined in this bill, is an imperative action we can take toward a targeted public-health approach to reduce harm and save lives.

Moreover, this legislation will bring much-needed support and resources directly to the communities of Massachusetts that are hardest hit by this public health crisis. When applying the funding formula established by the CARE Act to publicly available drug overdose and mortality rate data, Massachusetts is expected to receive \$56.6 million per year in state grants to fight substance use disorder with the opportunity to apply for additional funding. In addition, the hardest-hit communities in Massachusetts are expected to receive \$75.7 million in annual funding from local grants—current data suggests that 12 Massachusetts counties would be eligible for this local funding. Clinics and nonprofits in the Commonwealth could receive additional funds to support their prevention, treatment, and recovery programs, while first-responders and public health departments will have access to discounted overdose reversal drugs.

Your legislation will provide critical, life-saving resources to patients who need it most—and help physicians and other health care professionals get the tools they need to better screen, prevent, and treat patients who are suffering from this disease. We applaud your leadership and commitment to fighting for these patients, and we commend you for recognizing that we must attack this public health crisis with as much urgency and diligence as we did COVID-19.

We look forward to working with you to help pass this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

Carole E. Allen, MD, MBA, FAAP
President
Massachusetts Medical Society