

World of Pain, transcription

“Hi everybody! Welcome to World of Pain; I’m your host, Lauren Deluca.

Well, summer is about half over and things are certainly heating up; especially in Washington, which HR6, the SUPPORT Act which is short for “Substance use disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment”. Now, this is 58 pieces of legislation that are all related to opioid prescribing and ways to combat the so-called “opioid crisis.”

Now, we saw in USA Today, they had reported the proper data regarding the opioid overdose that was publicized in the American Journal of Public Health in March. So we are thrilled to see the Mainstream Media has started to peek their head into what’s going on in the opioid crisis, and the subsequent untreated pain crisis. We are all now trying to bring out the true data to the public and fighting at state and federal levels.

So, as we are approaching the 2018 midterm elections, we wanted to reach out to the community and let everyone know you are doing amazing work. With our community coming together and really making a lot of phone calls in June to the Senate, and the Senate HELP committee in particular, regarding the support for Chronic Illness Advocacy and Awareness groups Amendment to HR6 to protect the chronically ill.

Now, we have been in discussions with various Senators and Congressional offices regarding this particular piece of legislation, as it IS going to be impacting millions of people’s care across the country and for generations to come; should this piece of legislation pass unchanged. Therefore, we are asking all of our members to continue to make calls to their state senators, as well as the entire Senate HELP committee. Now, the HELP committee is the “Health, Education, Labor and Pensions” committee. There is one state senator from all of the states assigned to this committee. So, therefore, all of you have the ability to speak to at least your direct two state senators and all 23 members of the HELP committee, as they are on this committee to deal with health, education, labor and pensions. And this is absolutely a healthcare issue, and therefore, all of our members can call across state lines and letting them know you’re calling because of their position on the HELP committee.

So, when you call your state senators, and all of the senators on the HELP committee, we are asking all of our members and the community to come together and unite it...and share our united mission to ensure federal protections are upstanding before HR6 SUPPORT Act is passed. So therefore, our sister organization- Chronic Illness Awareness and Advocacy Group- has been working with a number of offices, and we are promoting and asking for support for our equal and fair access to palliative care. That is the name of Chronic Illness Awareness and Advocacy Group’s amendment. And we’re asking that when you call, you mention this amendment and reference the fact that you are a member of Chronic Illness Awareness and Advocacy Group; as this will start rallying together our support under a single movement and will show our legislators this is a united community and educated community. And we’re going to make sure you’re fully educated on this bill; so that when you make these calls, you feel comfortable in talking to your legislators about it.

But we will be working on this for a little bit of time. There are 58 pieces of legislation wrapped together, so we appreciate everyone’s patience as we get her the facts. And we will be having our next episode which will go over this legislation in more detail regarding the nuisances and what is good and what is bad. As you know, our community is suffering from an untreated pain crisis, but there is a crisis with street drugs- in particular, carfentanyl, which was never approved

for human consumption and is coming in from China and from Mexico, as reported by the media.

So, in order to ensure that we are protecting both those suffering from Substance Use Disorder and those with chronic illnesses and diseases, we need to approach and seek healthcare legislation that respects both communities; as we should not be sacrificing one classification of citizen for another. Therefore, that is why we are asking for equal and fair access to palliative care, as that is all we stand for. We believe those with Substance Use Disorder absolutely should receive the treatment they need for their underlying addiction, and the behavioral health they may need to seek in conjunction with that care...as well as those with chronic illnesses and diseases getting the care they need, whether that's dietary foods, medicines, pain medicines (including opioid analgesics) or diet and exercise. Complex illness requires complex care, therefore, please support Chronic Illness Advocacy and Awareness Group's "Equal and Fair Access to Palliative Care" amendment to HR6 SUPPORT Act.

We also, in our second half of World of Pain, we wanted to talk about one of the most important actions our community can do in addition to these phone calls. In 2018, we have a rare opportunity in that the American public is incredibly divided. However, in this division, we are seeing something unique in this country. We are seeing people stand up for democracy in a way that hasn't been inspired since the 1960s, as we are in a civil rights fight. We have very stark differences on the right and the left, but one thing that we can come together one is Equal and Fair Access to Palliative Care.

So, in the 2018 elections, there are town hall meetings and I actually attended one today, and I met with Congressman Joe Kennedy and we were able to have a very frank discussion about what is happening in the untreated pain crisis; and specifically Chronic Illness Advocacy and Awareness Group's amendment "Equal Access..." excuse me, "Equal and Fair Access to Palliative Care" and our requests to ensure that we are not sacrificing one community for another. And we all have that opportunity this year- every Congressman, Senator and state officials as well, that is up for election will be making rounds through your state; and they'll be announcing it through their personal websites.

And if you are able to attend one of these meetings, it is your opportunity to stand up in that room and get your voice heard...and when you do so, everyone in that room is going to hear about the untreated pain crisis- something many people may not be aware of. So, when you stand up and say 'Congressman, or Congresswoman, or Senator- whoever may be hosting the town hall meeting- that you want to know what they you want to know what they plan on doing to address the untreated pain crisis.' And they may ask you 'well, what is the untreated pain crisis?' This is your chance to fill them in. Tell them the untreated pain crisis is the result of the opiate crisis legislation and the regulations that have been put forth, as the CDC had admitted to grossly inflating the stat...the statistics when it regarded the overdoses that occurred in 2016, where they lumped together heroin, carfentanyl and opioids in to one category. And in fact, individuals that died with multiple substances in their system, for example, if someone had so called "party drugs" where they took an opiate along with drinking, did some cocaine... they actually would count each substance, rather than one individual death, and lump that in. So, the actual death count was inflated incredibly high.

And we are not underplaying any death as those with Substance Use Disorder and loved ones who have lost their loved ones to addiction- our heart goes out to you and we stand for you. We stand for those who need help, to get that help- whether that's addiction treatment or chronic

pain and disease treatment. We're all human, and we all deserve compassionate care in our greatest time of need. So please, take advantage of this opportunity.

Our country is incredibly divided but at the same time, we're incredibly inspired. We see more organizations coming together and standing up for the community- whether it's immigration rights, or it's human rights with the chronically ill or with the immigration and the children. You know, we are in unprecedented times. This isn't the normal the normal status quo of America, and in this time, we have an opportunity to take charge and shape the future. So let's do that, let's do it together. Let's come together and just like when America was first founded with a group of rebels that had all the odds stacked against them- there [were] more people in the UK, they were soldiers, they were trained...but we won. We won because we were fighting for the moral good, for humanity...for our freedoms. And again, we are fighting for our freedoms- our freedoms to our privacy, HR6 presents numerous [infringements] on our privacy rights; especially related to HIPPA and healthcare law.

There are also pieces of legislation that dictate individuals who are injured due to worker's compensation claims will now be treated differently. So, HR6 does much more than just release some money to help build and support addiction treatment centers. It is writing discrimination directly into our healthcare law, where people will be treated differently based on class, based on what is them. Now, someone should be treated differently based on what is wrong with the, given what their doctor's medical care decision is; but not based on location of accident, like workers' compensation claimants will now have different treatment and their access to opioids may be blocked because they had an injury on the job. And workers' compensation insurance is a huge player in this, um...as an old insurance agent, I have always known that workers' compensation has been a dying industry.

They always lose money, and what is a great way to kind of stop that bleed out is to stop approving medications and try to force people back to work. As I was unfortunately privy to some conversations where some insurance agents and even caregivers believe that someone who's out on workers' compensation and is having an opioid prescription is just staying home because they're lazy, and they don't feel like coming back to work because they've experienced this 'mass euphoria' that came from the opioid. Well, how about the person was really hurt? *scoff* Funny, nobody actually thinks the person really needed the help.

So this is the type of discrimination that we're facing, and the misinformation that we're facing. And this is all special interest groups; this is all financially driven like Washington always has been. But Washington, as far as at least in my lifetime, hasn't been writing discrimination into healthcare law, and we are about to write in serious discrimination that could affect generations to come. So it is our time, our time as Americans to rise back up and say 'we will not stand for discrimination.' [It] seems every 50 years or so, we have to do this. But you know what? Every 50 years or so, we win. It might be hard, it might get ugly, but we win. So that's why I'm confident we will win this.

So in closing, I just want to thank everybody for coming together; especially for our call to action and calling Senate HELP committee while I was in Washington D.C., as it left a huge impression on Washington D.C.

And they know our name, and they know our community is united. We are filled with intelligent, useful, amazing people with passion. You know, someone I spoke to recently said a saying that I absolutely love- "disabled, not disposable." We're all human beings, you know...we're all out there just trying to get our voices heard through the minutia of our day. But this is a human

rights issue for all of us, and if you do anything this year, please call your state senators and ask them to support “Equal and Fair Access to Palliative Care” amendment proposed by Chronic Illness Advocacy and Awareness Group- an organization raised in response to the medical emergency and untreated pain crisis in America, ran by chronic illness patients and for chronic illness patients.