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September 29, 2016

The Honorable Loretta Lynch
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

Dear Attorney General Lynch:

We write regarding the scourge of opioid abuse, and our mutual efforts to curtail this epidemic.

As you know, earlier this year Congress passed and the President signed into law S. 524, the Comprehensive Abuse Reduction Act (CARA). Among other things, this historic, bipartisan legislation created a comprehensive grant program at the Department of Justice, which would give grantees the flexibility to use federal funding in a variety of ways to combat opioid abuse.

Statistics show that 70 percent of young people get their prescription drugs from family and friends, and the DEA has warned that the "family medicine cabinet and the Internet have become today's back alley drug dealers."¹ To address this problem, during floor consideration of CARA the House adopted an amendment from Congressman Bishop to permit DOJ grantees to use federal funding for "[d]eveloping, implementing, or expanding a program (which may include demonstration projects) to utilize technology that provides a secure container for prescription drugs that would prevent or deter individuals, particularly adolescents, from gaining access to opioid medications that are lawfully prescribed for other individuals."²

As the Department moves forward with awarding CARA grants in the coming Fiscal Year, we encourage you to consider awarding a grant pursuant to the Bishop Amendment. We are aware that some institutions of higher learning, including the Bloomberg School of Public Health at John Hopkins University, have identified the need to evaluate more secure packaging

¹ Drug Enforcement Administration, "Prescription for Disaster: How Teens Abuse Medicine," *available at* https://www.dea.gov/pr/multimedia-library/publications/prescription_for_disaster_english.pdf.

² 42 U.S.C. § 3797ff(8).

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standards to prevent abuse and diversion.³ Given the sobering statistics surrounding opioid abuse among teens and young adults, we believe developing new and innovative ways to secure prescription opioids would do a great deal to combat the epidemic and protect the most vulnerable among us.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



BOB GOODLATTE

Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary



MIKE BISHOP

Member, Committee on the Judiciary

³ See section 4.3 of "The Prescription Opioid Epidemic: An Evidence-Based Approach," available at <http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/center-for-drug-safety-and-effectiveness/opioid-epidemic-town-hall-2015/2015-prescription-opioid-epidemic-report.pdf>.