



February 15, 2016

Dear Members of the Missouri General Assembly,

On behalf of the undersigned, the Collaborative for Effective Prescription Opioid Policies (CEPOP) respectfully urges you to authorize a state Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) for Missouri during the 2016 legislative session.

CEPOP was formed to advocate for comprehensive and balanced public policy change that will help confront the epidemic of prescription drug abuse in our nation. Today, CEPOP has over 65 organizations ranging from manufacturers and distributors to prescribing physicians, treatment providers, public health, public safety and patient advocates. We strongly believe that bringing the State of Missouri alongside all other states in the nation which already operate PDMPs would be an important step in this direction. We strongly supported this effort beginning last year and are hopeful it can be accomplished in 2016.

The facts are more compelling than ever that this is a national priority. An estimated 46 Americans die each day from a prescription drug overdose, most often involving an opioid medication. We recall the *New York Times* article in 2014 that described how Express Scripts found that the residents of eight neighboring states regularly travel into Missouri to fill their prescriptions suggesting a desire to avoid drug monitoring programs in their home areas.¹ As the only state in the country without a PDMP, Missouri remains vulnerable to a range of diversion tactics.

We are encouraged that, following last year's sudden adjournment, the Missouri legislature is moving forward on a PDMP measure. As the process continues, we encourage you to include the following elements in final legislation to ensure that Missouri will have a secure and functional PDMP:

- Implement technological improvements to facilitate secure access to the PDMP through electronic health information systems as expeditiously as possible;
- Allow for record retention for a reasonable amount of time – preferably at least one year;
- Enable appropriate interstate sharing of PDMP data;

¹ Alan Schwarz. "Missouri Alone in Resisting Prescription Drug Database." *New York Times*. 20 July 2014. Online.

- Include confidentiality protections from improper use of the system or of PDMP data, including from inappropriate access under open public records laws; and
- Include penalties for knowingly disclosing, using or obtaining information other than as authorized by law.

In closing, we want to restate our strongly held view that effective Missouri PDMP legislation will have a critical role in addressing prescription drug abuse in Missouri and the region. Any further delays will cost lives. Please let us know any way we can support your critical work.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry

American Public Health Association

AmerisourceBergen Corporation

axialHealthcare

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy

Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals

National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators

National Council for Behavioral Health

National Safety Council

The Honorable Mary Bono

Trust for America's Health

Verde Technologies