



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

March 6, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Senator McConnell,

As Congress begins constructing a budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, I write to urge you to continue funding the State Opioid Response (SOR) Grant. Our state appreciates the work that you are doing in conjunction with the Trump Administration to address the opioid crisis our country is facing.

We appreciate your efforts improve the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's funding formula, which is used to allocate SOR Grants to provide those states most directly impacted by the opioid crisis with greater funding. These changes resulted in New Hampshire seeing a substantial increase in support through the SOR Grant, and we have effectively used that support to deliver results.

New Hampshire has used its \$45.8 million share of SOR funding to create a new "hub and spoke" system of care for victims of New Hampshire's opioid crisis. On January 2, 2019, New Hampshire successfully launched the Doorway program, which is changing the way individuals, family members, caregivers, and providers address opioid use disorders (OUD) or other substance use disorders (SUD). The Doorway has brought together a broad array of stakeholders in an innovative partnership to improve services, supports, and resources. The system provides one-stop access through nine (9) regional locations, situated so no one has to travel more than 45 minutes to receive treatment and begin the process towards recovery.

We are proud of the achievements The Doorway has produced and believe it exhibits the vital need for a continuation of SOR grant funding in the next budget.

From January 2, 2019 through December 31, 2019, the 9 Doorways:

- Served 7,367 individuals;
- Provided 3,246 clinical evaluations to identify needed services.

Of the individuals served:

- 2,470 had opioid-related needs;
- 5,070 referrals to services were made to Medication Assisted Treatment Services, Outpatient Services, Residential Services, and Peer Recovery Services.

Through collaboration and cooperation, the Doorways began providing services within 60 days of the State of New Hampshire receiving the grant. Access to services is now available 24/7 through our 2-1-1 system and is just a visit or phone call away for individuals, family members, and friends.

The Doorways have succeeded in emerging as a centralized community resource for those struggling with a substance use disorder, providing a safe place to go for people in crisis. SUD treatment providers deliver outpatient treatment, residential treatment, peer recovery supports, and medication assisted

treatment (MAT). As one example of supporting the development of service providers, SOR funds have been leveraged to increase the number of MAT providers, as well as pay for MAT services for high-risk populations (pregnant and parenting women with OUD and individuals preparing for release from incarceration back into the community).

The Doorways have also successfully distributed Naloxone kits to individuals and friends/family members of those at risk of an opioid overdose. The Doorways assumed this role from DHHS in April, distributing 9,074 kits by the end of December. The Doorways worked closely with regional partners to include community organizations in this process.

As the Doorway system took root in regions, it exposed gaps in services that individuals need as part of their journey in recovery. As a result, the State used supplemental SOR funds to establish a total of 23 respite beds in two locations — Central and Southern New Hampshire. These beds are designed for short-term stays for those awaiting residential treatment or who are seeking a more permanent housing option. The State also expanded the Doorways flexible funds to include housing vouchers and increase the amounts for critical needs such as transportation and childcare. Last month, the Doorway served more than 1,000 New Hampshire residents seeking help with a substance use disorder (SUD) – the highest monthly total of clients served since the launch of the system. If these positive results are to continue, and our efforts to curb New Hampshire’s addiction crisis are to be sustained, it is essential that the 2021 budget includes a continuation of SOR funding.

As you consider how to better engineer this system and provide states with greater ability to combat the addiction crisis, I urge you to consider providing additional flexibility within the grand funding to allow us to better address a full range of SUD challenges.

In the weeks ahead, I hope Congress will take time to consider New Hampshire’s progress and continue provide the funding needed to address the SUD crisis in our state.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Sununu
Governor