

Steven C. Anderson, IOM, CAE
President & Chief Executive Officer

February 29, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

I am writing to express the support of the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) for S. 483, the “Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2016,” legislation that would promote a comprehensive and consistent approach to addressing and preventing opioid abuse, as well as all prescription drug diversion and abuse in the United States. We applaud your leadership in the ongoing fight against opioid abuse.

NACDS represents traditional drug stores and supermarkets and mass merchants with pharmacies. Chains operate more than 40,000 pharmacies, and NACDS’ chain member companies include regional chains, with a minimum of four stores, and national companies. Chains employ more than 3.2 million individuals, including 179,000 pharmacists. They fill over 2.9 billion prescriptions yearly, and help patients use medicines correctly and safely, while offering innovative services that improve patient health and healthcare affordability. NACDS members also include more than 850 supplier partners and over 60 international members representing 22 countries. For more information, visit www.NACDS.org.

NACDS and the chain pharmacy industry are committed to partnering with policymakers to develop viable strategies to prevent opioid abuse, as well as all prescription drug diversion and abuse. To this end, we support policies that empower law enforcement to protect Americans against the dangers of prescription drug diversion and abuse while maintaining legitimate patient access to needed medications. This important legislation would foster the development of such policies by directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to collaborate with the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, and in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Veterans Affairs, to identify obstacles to legitimate patient access to controlled substances, issues with diversion of controlled substances, and how collaboration between agencies and stakeholders can benefit patients and prevent diversion and abuse of prescription drugs, among other key findings. Moreover, this legislation would require consultation with patient and provider groups, including pharmacies, among other stakeholders. We appreciate the recognition of pharmacies as critical stakeholders in efforts to prevent prescription drug diversion and abuse.

We thank you for the opportunity to support this important legislation. We are committed to working with Congress and other policymakers to promote the health and welfare of our patients, as well as all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven C. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Steven C. Anderson, IOM, CAE
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Members of the United States Senate