



2008 NEW JERSEY CONGRESSIONAL ADDICTION PREVENTION AND TREATMENT SURVEY

I. General Views of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Policies to Address Stigma

The nation continues to focus on strategies to address the need to fight alcohol and drug use. Studies have found that the stigmatization of alcohol and drug addiction persists, and that the public acceptance of addiction as a disease, though seemingly broad, is actually quite shallow. Addiction is a widespread epidemic that affects millions of Americans, many of whom are in long-term recovery from the disease. Recently, science has made breakthroughs in understanding addiction and its effects on the brain. As a result, recovery from addiction has increasingly become concentrated on treating a patient's specific needs.

Indicate which principles you agree with (if any) regarding your general views of alcohol and drug addiction and policies to address the stigma surrounding addictive illnesses by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

- a) Alcohol and drug addiction are preventable, treatable, chronic diseases and are as consistently diagnosable as other illnesses such as diabetes, asthma and hypertension.
- b) Alcohol and drug addiction treatment are very effective and work as well as other established medical treatments for illnesses such as diabetes, asthma and hypertension.
- c) On the issue of drug use, the nation and state should more heavily emphasize strategies of interdiction and prosecution, which aim to control the problem by reducing the available supply of drugs.
- d) The country should pursue more strategies that favor a public health approach to alcohol and drug addiction and target demand reduction activities, such as prevention and treatment.
- e) Other _____

II. Recovery from Substance Use Disorders

Recovery from an alcohol or drug problem is a process of change through which an individual achieves abstinence and improved health, wellness and quality of life. The process may take months or years and may require ongoing disease management. As is the case with any chronic illness, addiction is not infrequently characterized by relapses.

Millions of Americans are in recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs, yet many still find it difficult to get an education, a good job, or health insurance due to



discriminatory policies and laws. These laws basically prevent people who have paid their debt to society from advancing themselves so they can better contribute to their families and their communities.

Recovery Support Services have been critical to helping people sustain their recovery from addiction for the long term. Recovery Community Organizations throughout the country have been providing services that help to support and sustain long-term recovery through the federal Recovery Community Support Program. These services are generally peer-to-peer services that focus less on illness (pathology) and more on wellness. They aim to help the client transition from formal treatment to the community and maximize the opportunities to create a lifetime of recovery and wellness for the individual as well as family, neighbors, and community. Peer-to-peer services include (1) assistance in housing, educational, and employment opportunities; (2) building constructive family and other personal relationships; (3) stress management assistance; (4) alcohol- and drug-free social and recreational activities; and (5) recovery coaching or mentoring to help manage the process of obtaining services from multiple systems, including primary and mental health care, child welfare, and criminal justice systems. The president has eliminated funding for recovery community organizations providing these services from his 2009 budget.

Indicate which principles you agree with (if any) regarding recovery from an addictive illness by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

- a) Services that support long-term recovery, such as the Recovery Community Services Program, have proven to be successful in communities across the country and should be restored, funded, and extended.
- b) Repeal laws that prevent people in recovery from an alcohol and other drug addictions from obtaining an education, welfare, licenses, housing, and health insurance.
- c) Will become a member of the Congressional Addiction Caucus, which focuses on issues affecting addiction and recovery (applicable only to candidates for the House of Representatives).
- d) Other _____

III. Preventing and Reducing Youth Alcohol and Drug Use

Although there is a gradual decline in illicit drug use among eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders across the country, according to the 2007 Monitoring the Future Study, the nations youth continue to use alcohol, marijuana, and other illicit drugs to an alarming degree. According to the study, 16%, 33%, and 44% of 8th graders, 10th graders, and 12th graders, respectively, used alcohol within the prior 30 days, while 18% of the 10th



graders and 29% of 12th graders admitted to drunkenness within the month. The prevalence rates for marijuana use (the most frequently used illicit drugs) in the prior year now stand at 10%, 25%, and 32% for grades, 8, 10, and 12, respectively. The study also showed a slight increase in the reported use of ecstasy, among the nation's youth.

The Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSC) supports programs which are developed to prevent school violence and the illegal use of drugs and alcohol (including tobacco) by elementary and secondary school children and is the foundation of school-based prevention. There have been funding cuts to the act in recent fiscal years. It has been only minimally funded, and as a result has not been as effective as it might have been in preventing drug use among children.

The Administration has proposed restructuring the SDFSCA program by significantly decreasing the role of state grants and refocusing national activities. For FY-2009, the Administration has requested \$282 million for the SDFSCA. Under this proposal, appropriations for state grants would be reduced to \$100 million (down from \$295 million in FY 2008), and appropriations for national activities would be decreased to \$182 million (down from \$219 million in FY 2008).

The STOP Act establishes a national media campaign aimed at underage drinking, funds underage-drinking prevention programs in communities, and requires the Department of Health and Human Services to report annually on progress against youth drinking. Major provisions of the STOP Act include a \$1 million annual national media campaign on underage drinking; \$5 million in grants to help community coalitions address underage drinking; \$5 million in grant funding to prevent alcohol abuse at institutions of higher education.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning the prevention and reduction of youth alcohol and drug use by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

- a) Increase taxes on alcoholic beverages in order to create a price disincentive to help reduce youth drinking.
- b) "Zero tolerance" policies, the practice of not tolerating undesirable behavior such as illegal drug use, the violation of which results in the automatic imposition of severe penalties for first-time offenders.
- c) Maintain funding for the SDFSC for programs to prevent school violence and the illegal use of drugs and alcohol (including tobacco) by elementary and secondary school children.
- d) Continue administering and fully funding the STOP Act.



- e) Conduct non-compulsory student surveys without the active consent of a parent or guardian as allowed for by federal law to measure youth use and develop programs / policies.
- f) Fund addiction prevention, early intervention and research as an investment in America's future.
- g) Other _____

IV. Public Capacity for Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment

Untreated substance use disorders are a major health problem that impacts society on multiple levels. They cost our nation more than \$484 billion per year in health care expenditures, lost earnings, lower work productivity, overcrowded jails and costs associated with crime and accidents and broken families. Yet millions of Americans can not access the treatment and recovery services they need.

According to the 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), approximately 23.6 million people over age 12 in the U.S. met the criteria for substance misuse or dependence in the past year, based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition (DSM-IV). Of these, only 2.5 million people received treatment in a facility specializing in substance use treatment, leaving 21.1 million people in need of treatment.

The lack of access to quality care has been well documented in New Jersey. In 2006, there were 54,825 addiction treatment admissions in New Jersey – down 13 percent or more than 8,000 from nearly 63,000 admissions from just ten years ago because fewer people are able to access treatment due to limited treatment capacity. The New Jersey Division of Addiction Services reports more than 21,000 people sought addiction treatment in 2007 but could not access it as a result of limited capacity.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning expanding public capacity for alcohol and drug addiction treatment by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

- a) Enact treatment on demand initiatives that aim to offer all those seeking publicly funded substance abuse treatment immediate entry into a program.
- b) Increase federal excise tax on alcoholic beverages to expand treatment capacity.
- c) Increase federal substance abuse block grant funding for addiction treatment in order to expand treatment capacity.



___ d) Dedicate drug forfeiture funds to expand treatment capacity.

___ e) Other _____

V. Health Care and Substance Use Disorders

Untreated chronic illnesses, which include substance use disorders, are shown to drive up health care costs. Substance use disorders are a chronic, treatable medical condition that when left untreated result in other health conditions, including liver and heart disease, suicide, and other illnesses. Nonetheless, providers often fail to detect and treat the substance use disorder, the primary illness from which other maladies arise. This is because diagnosis and treatment of substance use disorders often remain separate from primary care and are not integrated and coordinated with other medical care. Integration and coordination of care will save money and result in better outcomes.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning substance use and health care by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

___ a) Medicaid must be flexible enough to finance those needed services for Substance Use Disorders.

___ b) Treatment for substance use disorders is critical to preventing and managing chronic and other diseases and must therefore be addressed specifically as part of a broader effort around care coordination and integration.

___ c) Substance use conditions differ from and are unrelated to other health conditions; treatment for such conditions should remain separate and distinct from other health care services.

___ d) Implement policies that promote long-term recovery from addiction as integral to overall health and end the criminalization of addiction.

___ e) Ensure coverage for equitable and effective addiction prevention, treatment and recovery care in all public and private health plans.

___ f) Other _____

VI. Private Health Insurance for Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment

The implementation of managed care has made access to treatment more difficult for privately insured persons with an addiction, as well as for privately insured families trying to secure access to care for their family members. With treatment limits imposed by managed care, many privately insured persons and family members seek access to



publicly funded services as an alternative. This circumstance has increased the burden to federal, state and local governments by as much as 20 percent. The private sector has successfully shifted the burden of care to the public sector, exhausting resources that otherwise could have been spent on expanding treatment capacity.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning expanding private health coverage for alcohol and drug addiction treatment by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

- a) Provide parity for alcohol and drug addiction treatment in an insurance contract. The contract must include both inpatient and outpatient treatment at the same level as for other medical services and provide that utilization management in health insurance contracts for addiction and mental health services is no more restrictive than utilization management for other health services.
- b) As part of the federal substance abuse block grant, require states to establish an addiction treatment services ombudsman to assist consumers of addiction treatment services in navigating private health plans' appeals processes.
- c) Require health insurance providers to utilize a neutral assessment instrument such as American Society of Addiction Medicine – Patient Placement Criteria (ASAM – PPC) or Addiction Severity Index (ASI) for addiction treatment determinations.
- e) Provide that federal parity laws do not preempt stronger state parity laws.
- f) Other _____

VII. Criminal Justice and Treating the Addicted Offender

The link between substance use and criminal activity is well documented. Approximately 80% of prisoners have extensive substance use histories. Many violated drug or alcohol laws were under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at the time they committed their crimes, stole property to buy drugs, have a history of substance use disorders, or share some combination of these characteristics. The Bureau of Justice Statistics survey reported that 52% of female prisoners and 44% of male prisoners met the criteria for alcohol or drug dependence upon incarceration. Despite high levels of substance use disorders, relatively few prisoners receive drug treatment while incarcerated.

Each year, approximately 650,000 prisoners are released from jail. An estimated two-thirds of them are rearrested within three years. In contrast, within three years of Drug Court completion, only 15% of New Jersey's Drug Court graduates were rearrested.



The Second Chance Act prisoner reentry legislation is designed to reduce recidivism by coordinating reentry services and criminal justice policies at the federal, state, and local levels. The law, which Congress authorized but did not fund, will help connect people released from prison and jail to mentoring, mental health and substance abuse treatment, expand job training and placement services, and facilitate transitional housing and case management services. It authorizes a \$55 million grant program to state and local governments to develop reentry initiatives and a \$15 million mentoring program for community and faith-based organizations. Funding, however, has not been provided to enable community- and faith-based organizations to access these grants and provide the necessary services.

Indicate which principles you support (if any) concerning the criminal justice system and the treatment of the addicted offender by placing a check mark next to the letter(s) which correspond with your views.

- a) Support mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.
- b) Increase federal funding for Drug Courts to reach an estimated 1.47 million nonviolent offenders in the American criminal justice system who are in need of this proven antidote to substance abuse and associated crime.
- c) Given the success of drug courts in the states, the federal government should study how to modify its sentencing to incorporate elements of the drug court model and to assess the effectiveness of community-based alternatives to imprisonment for nonviolent federal drug felons.
- d) Support legislation that puts an emphasis on substance use treatment alternatives instead of incarceration.
- e) Allow first- and second-time, non-violent, simple drug possession offenders the opportunity to receive substance abuse treatment instead of incarceration.
- f) Establish treatment of criminal offenders as a key part of the entire criminal justice system that encompasses incarceration, probation and parole.
- g) Fund the Second Chance Act to ensure that prisoners receive the substance use treatment they need, as well as other services.
- h) Other _____

VIII. Other

On an attached page, in a total of seventy-five (75) words or less, please explain if you are elected any other legislative priorities you will have pertaining to the prevention and treatment of, and recovery from, alcohol and drug addiction.



CANDIDATE MUST SIGN SURVEY TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DATABASE

Candidate Name: _____
(please print)

Candidate Signature: _____

District: _____

Party: _____

Date: _____