March 20, 2023

The Honorable Dr. Susan Talamantes Eggman
Chair, Senate Health Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3310

Sacramento, California 95814

**RE: Support for SB 641 – Naloxone Distribution Expansion**

Dear Chair Eggman,

[Name of Organization] is proud to support SB 641 (Roth), which requires the California Department of Health Care Services to make all FDA-approved formulations and dosage strengths of naloxone available to eligible applicants through the Naloxone Distribution Project (NDP). This bill is crucial to addressing the opioid epidemic in our state, which results in thousands of overdose deaths each year. It will also save scarce state resources—freeing up funding that could be used to save even more lives.

[Brief overview of your organization]

The opioid crisis is one of the most significant public health crises in California's history. Preliminary 2021 data shows that there were 6,843 opioid-related overdose deaths in our state, with fentanyl-related deaths accounting for the vast majority. The proliferation of fentanyl, which is up to 50 times stronger than heroin, has made it increasingly difficult to reverse overdoses with the current dosage strengths of naloxone provided by the NDP.

The NDP is a critical tool in preventing overdose deaths, and this bill would ensure that all FDA-approved formulations and dosage strengths of naloxone are made available to eligible applicants. By providing additional dosage strengths and formulations of naloxone, SB 641 will help ensure that those who administer naloxone—including law enforcement, first responders, community organizations, and school personnel—have the best chance of reversing overdoses and saving lives.

A collateral benefit of SB 641 is that it will save state resources. For example, while the NDP currently provides a four-milligram nasal naloxone formulation but has chosen not to make the eight-milligram nasal formulation available. However, data from California’s own Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)—and numerous other studies—show the insufficiency and inefficiency of four-milligram naloxone.

CDCR responded to 579 overdose cases between March 15, 2021 and March 14, 2022. Of that number, 81.3% of cases (471) consumed two or more units of four-milligram naloxone, a remarkable 55% of the cases (319) relied on three or more doses, and more than 20% of cases (122) used five or more doses. In some instances, as many as ten doses of four-milligram naloxone were administered. When taking into consideration the fact that the eight-milligram product can be purchased by the NDP at the same price as the four-milligram product, it is easy to see that expanding product availability would also save the state money.

[Personal story and impact of SB 641]

SB 641 stands for the simple proposition that we must deploy all available, FDA-approved tools to curb the scourge of California’s opioid epidemic. For these reasons, [Name of Organization] is proud to support SB 641 and urges your Committee’s approval of this critically important measure.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Organization]

CC: Members, Senate Health Committee

 Reyes Diaz, Consultant, Senate Health Committee

 Joe Parra, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus