

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



FIGHTING *for a* **FAIR SHOT** *for* **FAMILIES, KIDS** *and* **SENIORS**

Fighting the Opioid Epidemic

Senator Casey is deeply concerned by the devastating impact of the opioid epidemic, which is affecting families and communities in all corners of Pennsylvania. He is committed to fighting for the resources communities need to save lives and support individuals with substance use disorders who are trying to rebuild their lives in recovery.

Reversing the tragic trend of opioid overdose deaths is a top priority for Senator Casey. Senator Casey is a member of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions and the Committee on Finance, both of which oversee policies and programs related to substance use disorder and health care. Senator Casey is using his positions on these committees, and his role as Ranking Member of the Special Committee on Aging, to protect Medicaid, expand and protect health care access for all individuals with substance use disorders and promote evidence-based treatment and intervention programs.

Supporting Funding for Local Communities

- Senator Casey helped to secure over \$7 billion in new funding to combat the opioid epidemic, including \$1 billion in the **21st Century Cures Act** and \$6 billion in the 2018 budget deal.
- Senator Casey introduced **the Combating the Opioid Epidemic Act**. This legislation will provide \$45 billion to address the opioid crisis. More than \$44 billion will go to states over 10 years to help them address the crisis, while more than \$250 million will be used to fund research on addiction and pain. It is based on a similar provision in a Senate Republican scheme to repeal the Affordable Care Act. However, unlike this Republican proposal, Senator Casey's legislation provides this funding without curtailing access to substance use treatment by decimating Medicaid and shredding coverage requirements for private insurance plans.

Promoting Access to Treatment & Opioid Education

- Senator Casey supported the **21st Century Cures Act**, which included \$1 billion in new funding to support access to treatment for individuals with opioid use disorders. Pennsylvania received \$53 million of that funding.
- Senator Casey supported the **Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA)**, which authorized multiple programs to support evidence-based treatment and intervention programs.
- Senator Casey has been a leader in the effort to expand and protect the Medicaid program. Medicaid expansion has been pivotal to increasing the availability of treatment for opioid use disorder. In 2016, Medicaid covered treatment for four in ten adults with an opioid use disorder and in 2014, Medicaid was the 2nd largest payer, second only to state and local government programs, for opioid treatment.
- Senator Casey introduced the bipartisan **Medicare Beneficiary Opioid Addiction Act** to ensure seniors living with an opioid use disorder have access to the treatment that is right for them. Stemming from the Senator's work, the Senate Finance Committee passed a demonstration program to cover key opioid treatments in Medicare in June 2018.

- Senator Casey authored the **John Thomas Decker Act**. This bill was named after a young Pennsylvania man who developed an opioid use disorder after being legally prescribed opioids for a sports-related injury. It provides student athletes, their parents, coaches and health care providers with information about the risks of opioid misuse and how to identify alternatives to opioids for pain management. This bill was signed into law in 2016.

Protecting Infants & Children

- Senator Casey worked with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to introduce the **Protecting Moms and Infants Act**. This bill builds upon their earlier bill, the Protecting Our Infants Act. The bill requires the Department of Human Services to provide an update on its efforts to implement the final strategy and recommendations that were required under the Protecting Our Infants Act, and also reauthorizes an important grant program that supports access to residential treatment for pregnant and postpartum women. The bill was included in S. 2680, the **Opioid Crisis Response Act**, which passed out of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions in April 2018.
- Senator Casey introduced another bill that was included in the Opioid Crisis Response Act: S. 2296, the **Supporting Infant Plans of Safe Care Implementation Act**. This legislation builds upon Senator Casey's earlier bill, the Infant Plan of Safe Care Improvement Act, and will establish a new formula grant to states to support their efforts to implement plans of safe care for every infant who needs one. The bill will also promote better coordination among stakeholders, and requires the Department of Human Services to provide more guidance to states to support their implementation of the law.
- Senator Casey previously worked with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on the **Protecting Our Infants Act**, which addresses the growing issue of infants diagnosed with newborn withdrawal. It requires a new strategy to address research and program gaps, as well as recommendations for preventing and treating this condition. This bill was signed into law on November 25, 2015.
- Senator Casey authored the **Plan of Safe Care Improvement Act**. This bill made targeted improvements to the Plan of Safe Care requirement under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which is supposed to ensure that infants born with symptoms of prenatal drug or alcohol exposure, or whose mothers show evidence of drug use, are not sent home to unsafe environments. This bill was included in S. 524, the **Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA)**, as the Infant Plan of Safe Care Improvement Act; CARA was signed into law in 2016.

Supporting Grandfamilies

- Senator Casey introduced the bipartisan **Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act** to create a one-stop-shop of resources to help grandparents raising grandchildren address the challenges they may face. Because of the opioid crisis, the number of grandparents in Pennsylvania who are raising their grandchildren is on the rise. This bill unanimously passed the Senate in 2018.

Law Enforcement

- Senator Casey has signed appropriations letters to support funding for **drug courts**, which are uniquely equipped for non-violent offenders who have a substance use disorder. These courts provide individuals with intensive treatment, judicial supervision, individualized consequences

and other medical services in order to help them to overcome their substance use disorder. Senator Casey highlighted the work of these courts in a floor speech for 2018's National Drug Court Month.

- Senator Casey has signed appropriations letters supporting funding for the **High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program**, which provides funding for and coordinates federal, state and local law enforcement agencies in certain areas where drug trafficking poses a unique threat. These coordinated efforts by law enforcement help disrupt and dismantle drug-trafficking organizations and reduce drug-related crime.