

The Comprehensive Addiction & Recovery Act (CARA)

Authored by U.S. Senator Rob Portman

The heroin and opioid epidemic is having a devastating impact on public health and safety in communities across Ohio and the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdoses now surpass automobile accidents as the leading cause of injury-related death for Americans. More than 120 people die as a result of overdose in this country every day.

Addiction is a treatable disease, but only 10 percent of those who need treatment receive it. Discoveries in the science of addiction have led to advances in drug abuse treatment that can help people stop abusing drugs, lead productive lives, and achieve their God-given potential.

Experts agree that the most effective way to address the challenges of addiction is initiate a comprehensive response that includes prevention, law enforcement strategies, addressing overdoses, expansion of evidence-based treatment, and support for those in, or seeking, recovery.

It is only through a comprehensive approach that leverages evidence-based law enforcement and health care services, including treatment, that we will stop and reverse current trends. CARA authorizes \$181 million annually in federal funding to support a comprehensive response to the heroin and opioid epidemic.

1. Funding:



CARA includes an authorization of \$181 million in resources for a comprehensive response to the heroin and opioid epidemic.

2. Treatment:



CARA brings us closer to treating addiction in America like a disease with individualized treatment and follow-up for each patient, including funding for treatment, expansion of medication assisted treatment, and specialized programs for pregnant women, mothers, veterans, and youth.

3. Prevention:



CARA includes education efforts and community-based prevention, including support for community coalitions and a critical awareness campaign.

4. Recovery:



CARA creates a new recovery programs to provide robust recovery services in local communities, including recovery support for high schools and higher education institutions nationwide.

5. Overdose Reversal:



CARA expands the availability of naloxone to law enforcement agencies and other first responders to help reverse overdoses and save lives.

6. Access to Treatment:



CARA expands access to medication assisted treatment by giving prescribing authority to nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

7. Law Enforcement:



CARA expands overdose reversal drugs for law enforcement, and training resources to better divert individuals with substance use disorders, and provides assistance with expanding disposal sites for prescription medication.

8. Criminal Justice Reform:



CARA expands treatment for individuals involved in the criminal justice system instead of haphazardly placing them in jails and prisons through a treatment alternative to incarceration program.