

One Minute Floor Speech 5/12/2016 on Opioid Abuse

The opioid abuse epidemic has tragically touched every corner of this nation with over half of all drug overdose deaths linked to prescription opioids. At least once a day someone in my home state of Colorado loses a friend or family member due to drug abuse.

In 2013, Colorado was ranked as having the second-most prevalent epidemic of prescription drug abuse in the country. The Colorado Consortium was created that year to form a collaborative group of state regulating agencies, universities, and community groups dedicated to finding solutions to opioid addiction and abuse.

State and locally driven efforts like the Colorado Consortium can help supplement existing programs in the areas in which they already operate. However, without raising national awareness of the heroin and opioid epidemic, these local efforts will continue to struggle to gain the resources they need.

There is no silver bullet; it will take a multi-front, coordinated approach to aid communities in combating the opioid epidemic.

Beyond securing our borders and enabling law enforcement to do their jobs, expanding opioid abuse prevention and education efforts and treating those afflicted with addiction are the most important actions Congress can take. That is the focus of our work in the House on the bipartisan Heroin Task Force.