



Write Your Elected Officials

**Write your state and local elected representatives.
Tell them you want viral hepatitis moved to the
top of their health agenda.**

SAMPLE LETTER

May 18, 2018

The Honorable John Adams
United States Senate
400 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Adams: [or Representative for House]

My name is Jane Doe. I am an outreach worker at People Matter in Any town, USA. I encourage you to cosponsor [choose one & delete the other: SB 2579 (for Senate) HR 5353 (for House) or], *Eliminating Opioid Related Infectious Diseases Act of 2018*. This important legislation establishes, promotes, and implements infectious disease surveillance, education, screening, testing and linkage to care programs for hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV), and HIV. This bill aims to address the infectious disease consequences of the opioid epidemic for those at risk at the state, local, territorial, and tribal levels.

The United States opiate epidemic takes the lives of 174 people a day from overdose. At the same time, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) deaths associated with hepatitis C have surpassed the total combined number of deaths from 60 other infectious diseases, including HIV, pneumococcal disease, and tuberculosis, and the number of HCV and HBV infections are rising. The overlapping epidemics, or syndemic, is now a public health crisis. The implementation of combined prevention and treatment interventions can control and reverse components of the syndemic. Early diagnosis of HBV and HCV is critical for preventing and managing the most serious effects of chronic viral hepatitis infection, such as liver cancer and liver failure.

Every day I educate the clients at People Matter about the risk of contracting hepatitis and the importance of using new injection equipment. Just like you, our clients care about their health so they ask, "Where can I get tested?" Unfortunately, at our site we do not have the funds to provide the simple rapid test for HCV like we do with HIV. Nor do we have free access to the hepatitis B vaccine for adults to vaccinate against infection. We need your support on this bill so all of us working to address the syndemic can do so using the holistic approach the crisis necessitates.

We urge you to make the consequences of the syndemic a leading health priority in Congress through expanded surveillance, screening and testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and other infectious diseases. Please support the *Eliminating Opioid Related Infectious Diseases Act of 2018*.

Thank you for your time and your continued dedication to the people of Any Town and our health.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe
Street address
City, State, Zip Code