



**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY**

Washington, D.C. 20503

**Statement of Michael P. Botticelli,
Nominee for
Director of National Drug Control Policy**

Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Thursday, November 13, 2014

Chairwoman Hirono and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me to discuss my nomination to be Director of National Drug Control Policy. I am honored that President Obama has nominated me for this position, and it is a privilege to be considered by this Committee. I want to thank the President for providing me this opportunity to serve the Nation.

I also want to thank the Members of this Committee and your staffs for meeting with me and for sharing your views since I began working for this Administration, first as Deputy Director in November 2012 then as Acting Director since March. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our work to reduce substance use disorders and their consequences in America.

And I am particularly grateful to my family and friends for their steadfast support. My husband, David Wells, is in the audience today, and I would not be here today without his ongoing love and encouragement.

As I've said when I've met with constituent groups across the country, I am humbled at the opportunity I have been given. Twenty-six years ago this month, I began my own recovery journey. I never imagined at that time that I would find myself with the chance to lead an office within the White House. My own personal story is a testament to how recovery can transform lives. For nearly two decades, I worked for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, culminating in nine years as the Director of the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, a position I left to join the Administration.

As Director of National Drug Control Policy, I will continue to advance the objectives set out in the *National Drug Control Strategy*, which outlines the Administration's efforts to reduce illicit drug use, manufacturing and trafficking, drug-related crime and violence, and drug-related health consequences. We are doing this through a balanced approach of public health programs, law enforcement, and international partnerships. The *Strategy* is rooted in the science of drug addiction as a brain disease — one that can be prevented and treated, and from which people can recover.

This drug policy emphasizes four main activity areas: prevention, treatment, criminal justice reform, and recovery. Prevention encompasses both activities to reduce the demand for drugs in our communities as well as to reduce the flow of drugs into the United States. We are advancing a 21st century approach to treatment of substance use disorders as a chronic disease, including the use of FDA-approved medications. Our criminal justice efforts emphasize the need to address substance use disorders as a disease within the criminal justice system and supporting evidence-based alternatives to incarceration. Lastly, we are working to remove the stigma and other barriers in education, employment and housing that too often hold back people from successful recovery.

In addition to these areas, I will continue, if confirmed, to address the public health epidemic of opioid drug use, including prescription painkillers and heroin. Reducing and preventing overdose deaths is also a critical focus of our efforts.

I will continue to ensure that our efforts are coordinated among the various federal agencies tasked with executing the *Strategy* so that we are maximizing our efforts, monitoring our performance to

meet our goals, and continue to foster strong relationships with key state and local, criminal justice, and public health partners.

Madam Chairwoman, thank you again for the invitation to speak with you today. I hope that we will be able to continue to work together to improve the health and lives of the American people. I will be happy to answer any questions.