



National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

September 16, 2014

Senator Patrick Leahy  
Chairman  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
437 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley:

On behalf of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), I write in support of the nomination of Michael Botticelli to serve as the permanent Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. I hope that the Committee will move this important nomination forward without delay. Acting Director Botticelli possesses the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to advance the goals of the National Drug Control Strategy.

NACCHO is the voice of the nation's 2,800 local health departments across the country. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. Local health departments are on the front lines of responding to the growing epidemic of heroin and prescription drug opioid abuse, misuse and overdose.

In 2010, there were over 16,600 deaths caused by opioid pain relievers in 2010 and another 3,000 deaths caused by heroin. Overall, the number of Americans dependent on heroin doubled from 2002 to 2012. Local health departments are responding to these challenges, identifying "hot spots" through surveillance and coordinating community partners to raise awareness and educate the public about prevention of opioid abuse and overdose. Local health departments also work to expand access to medications that can reverse opioid overdose, thereby saving lives.

Acting Director Botticelli has a long tenure in the field of governmental substance use prevention and treatment having served as Director of the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services in Massachusetts. As the Acting Director of ONDCP, Mr. Botticelli has provided important leadership on opioid issues and proven his ability to lead the office. His success is based in part on his ability to work collaboratively with other sectors representing criminal justice, education, interdiction, prevention, public health and others.

In closing, NACCHO strongly supports the nomination of Mr. Michael Botticelli to serve as the permanent Director of ONDCP and look forward to swift action to confirm his nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert M. Pestronk".

Robert M. Pestronk, MPH  
Executive Director



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.