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COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
BUDGET
ENERGY AND
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February 9, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

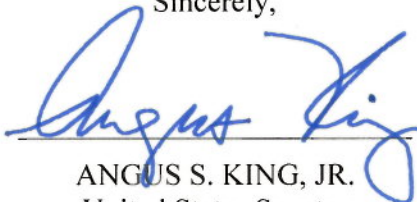
Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairman Leahy,

I am encouraged by the inclusion of \$6 billion in funding devoted to the opioid epidemic for FY'18 and FY'19 in the recently passed budget agreement. This significant allocation of resources marks an important step forward in our efforts to turn the tide against this crisis. It is also important that the instructions for this funding stipulate that states facing high mortality rates must be prioritized. Therefore, it is imperative that the Appropriations Committee base funding allocations on this factor, and prioritize funding for hard hit, primarily rural, states like Maine, New Hampshire and West Virginia in anticipation of the March omnibus.

Last year, Maine received just over \$2 million for treatment and prevention grants under the 21st Century Cures Act. While the Cures Act funding was a positive first step, it is simply not enough to make significant progress against this scourge. There is more than one overdose death each day in Maine, and roughly 25,000 to 30,000 people in the state seeking treatment but unable to enroll in a program. Recently, I was also disappointed to learn from tribal leaders that they were unable to apply for Cures Act funding. It is critical that these funds be accessible to tribes grappling with the epidemic. After years advocating for significant resources to address opioid addiction, Congress has finally acted, and now it is time for appropriators to provide resources to those who so desperately need it.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. I look forward to working with both of you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



ANGUS S. KING, JR.
United States Senator

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