

Address the problem of pain: Support S. 660—“National Pain Care Policy Act”

ISSUE

Pain is the leading cause of disability in the United States, and is the most common reason Americans access the health care system. More than 75 million Americans reportedly suffer from chronic and/or acute pain. Uncontrolled pain can devastate a patient’s quality of life, affecting his or her family, work, community involvement and other activities. In some cases, pain conditions can even be life-threatening.

S. 660, introduced by Sens. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Chris Dodd (D-CA), would help combat the problem of pain by improving pain care research, education, training, access, and outreach. Companion legislation, H.R. 756, has already passed the U.S. House of Representatives.

PROBLEM

Most pain conditions can be alleviated with proper medical treatment. However, patients suffering from pain can often face barriers that can prevent proper assessment, diagnosis, treatment and management. Some people are not aware of treatment options, and others may be afraid to seek proper medical attention.

SOLUTION

S. 660 would address the problem of pain by:

- Authorizing an Institute of Medicine Conference on Pain Care;
- Authorizing a Pain Consortium at the National Institutes of Health;
- Providing comprehensive pain care education and training for health care professionals; and
- Instituting a public awareness campaign on pain management.

CONGRESSIONAL REQUEST

Please cosponsor S. 660, The National Pain Care Policy Act. This legislation would help patients who suffer from pain, as well as the physicians who treat them.

Anesthesiologists: Physicians providing the lifeline of modern medicine. Founded in 1905, the American Society of Anesthesiologists is an educational, research and scientific association with 43,000 members organized to raise and maintain the standards of the medical practice of anesthesiology and improve the care of the patient.

For more information visit the American Society of Anesthesiologists website at www.ASAhq.org.