

July 18, 2024

The Honorable Joe Manchin
U.S. Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Braun
U.S. Senate
404 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Manchin and Braun:

On behalf of the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) and our nearly 50,000 members, I am writing to express our support for S. 3519, Tyler's Law, which would direct the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to issue guidance to hospital emergency departments on the implementation of routine fentanyl testing for patients experiencing a suspected overdose.

More than 111,000 people died from drug overdoses in 2022. More than 84,000 of these deaths were the result of an opioid. Nearly all of these opioid fatalities, more than 90 percent, were caused by fentanyl. As you know, when patients arrive at the emergency department because of a suspected overdose, rapid drug screens are often utilized to try to determine what the individual might have taken. However, standard panels only test for marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, opiates and PCP, not fentanyl. Incorporating fentanyl into regular testing protocols could save lives by providing emergency care professionals with the information they need to appropriately treat the patient. Knowing this information after an overdose can also help the patient and their care team during recovery.

Tyler's Law would take steps to ensure that patients experiencing overdose are appropriately treated by requiring HHS to study the feasibility of testing for fentanyl in emergency departments to weigh the potential benefits against the burden on hospitals it might represent. After the completion of the study, HHS would issue guidance to hospitals on whether and how they should implement testing for fentanyl.

As professionals on the frontlines of our nation's health care system, emergency nurses are critical to providing emergency care, especially as overdose deaths continue to ravage our communities. We thank you for introducing this legislation and for your leadership on this critical issue. If you have any questions, please contact Rob Kramer, ENA's Director of Government Relations, at 202-465-4756.

Sincerely,



Chris Dellinger, MBA, BSN, RN, FAEN
2024 ENA President