



# NEWS

## The United States Conference of Mayors

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### THE NATION'S MAYORS APPLAUD LANDMARK SURGEON GENERAL'S REPORT ON FIGHTING ADDICTION IN AMERICA

Washington, D.C. – The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) today commends the release of *"Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health"*, a comprehensive report examining the epidemic of alcohol and drug misuse, substance use disorders and addiction facing America.

"U.S. Cities are being decimated by this crisis of addiction which has killed more than 500,000 Americans since 2000. We affirm Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy's report and recognize that it supports what we have long understood -- that addiction to alcohol, opioids and other drugs is a disease that can be addressed with prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery support," said Boston (MA) Mayor Martin J. Walsh, who Chairs the Conference's Task Force on Substance Abuse, Treatment and Recovery.

As Task Force Chair, Mayor Walsh leads mayors in discussions on the devastating impact of substance abuse and addiction on cities and examines and shares information on effective recovery services strategies and approaches. In addition to the work of the task force, the Conference of Mayors, The National Association of Counties, National League of Cities and, with the U.S. Communities Purchasing Alliance and Premier, Inc., have secured industry-leading discounts for naloxone and medications containing buprenorphine. These medications help prevent painful withdrawal symptoms when a person stops taking opioid drugs. The program pools the purchasing power of more than 62,000 agencies in state and local government and the non-profit sector.

Walsh believes this work, coupled with the Surgeon General's report, will create a long-lasting impact toward turning the tide of addiction in this country.

Highlighting efforts already underway in his city to combat addiction, Walsh continued, "In Boston, we understand that and have taken a multi-pronged approach, working from every angle to promote prevention, centralize access to treatment, and provide recovery and support services. The report also highlights the need to educate youth and families early and provide opportunities for screening across the lifespan, and in Boston we are launching a comprehensive needs assessment to develop the first-ever city-wide strategy for prevention of substance misuse in the City of Boston. In addition, public school nurses are implementing an annual verbal substance misuse screening in two grade levels to support early detection among youth."

"The importance and impact of this report will help change the conversation and the language used when we talk about addiction," Walsh concluded.

