

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Employers Caution Against Charging Employees' Health Coverage to  
Pay for Opioid Bill**

WASHINGTON, June 22, 2018 –The [National Coalition on Benefits](http://www.coalitiononbenefits.org) issued the following statement in connection with the House passage of legislation targeting opioid abuse.

“The National Coalition on Benefits (NCB) applauds House passage of bipartisan opioid abuse legislation to address this devastating crisis. However, the NCB is very disappointed by the choice of an expensive pay-for provision that will increase the cost of employer-sponsored health benefits. Since 2004, employer costs for treating opioid addiction have skyrocketed from \$300 million to \$2.6 billion, so employers are committed to reducing the human cost of opioid abuse and have stepped up prevention efforts and assistance to employees and their families who may be affected. However, changing Medicare coverage rules for end stage renal disease (ESRD) patients is unrelated to opioid abuse and simply shifts costs to employer-provided health plans. This unfortunate cost-shift onto employees' health coverage – and the threat of future similar actions – may threaten the affordability of health benefits enjoyed by 178 million Americans and runs counter to employer efforts to reduce coverage costs while maintaining good benefits. Congress must find solutions to support the important fight against the opioid epidemic that do not increase health care costs for millions of Americans.”

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*The National Coalition on Benefits (NCB) is dedicated to preserving the benefits of the more than 178 million Americans who receive health insurance through employers. The Coalition is comprised of major employer trade associations, representing large and small employers. NCB also includes many large employers with employees in all 50 states (see [www.coalitiononbenefits.org](http://www.coalitiononbenefits.org)).*