



Jonathan Singer &lt;repsinger@gmail.com&gt;

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**Handwritten Letters in Support of HB18-1003, -1007, -1136**

1 message

**Amy Petré Hill** <amypetre@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 12, 2018 at 9:34 AM

To: jonathan.singer.house@state.co.us

Cc: Amy Petré Hill &lt;amy@mountainviewunitedchurch.org&gt;

Dear Representative Singer,

My name is Amy Petré Hill and I serve at Mountain View United Church in Aurora. For the last few weeks, my congregation has been studying the rising rates of opioid substance use disorders and the distressing lack of services available to help individuals and families seeking help recovering from such disorders. Several members admitted for the first time that they or a loved one is struggling with opioid substance misuse.

Attached are 9 heartfelt handwritten or typed letters from congregants sharing their experiences and their reasons for supporting HB-1003, HB-1007, and HB-1136. They ask that you do the same. The writers have included their addresses and names: I am only helping them share their letters with you by scanning them and emailing them to every member of the House Public Health and Human Services Committee.

I wish to personally express support for all these three bills because I see the devastating impact a lack of substance use disorder treatment and mental health treatment everyday. In addition to serving at Mountain View United Church, I work as a chaplain/interfaith spiritual caregiver at Porter Adventists Hospital, with most of my time being spent on the outpatient and inpatient psychiatric care units. Unfortunately, part of this work includes helping individuals and families understand that dependence upon opioids—often developed under treatment for physical pain from a physician—is not about personal failure or lacking in faith, but is a real health issue.

Those struggling with opioid abuse disorders deserve medical treatment, psychological treatment, and the support from a caring community to help in their recovery. We, as a society, fail to grasp this truth and our current laws “punish” people with substance use disorders whom we collectively judge “weak” or “failing” because they are attempting to treat real physical and psychological pain in ineffective ways. Yet, we, as a society, fail to hold ourselves accountable for not providing access to mental health services and affective, non-addictive chronic pain management resources.

Colorado’s Opioid and Other Substance Use Disorders Interim Study Committee agrees that the opioid substance use disorder crisis is not about any individual’s lack of willpower or moral resolve, but a public health issue deserving of a societal response. HB-1003 ensures that effective research and policy development addressing this crisis continues, and grants are available for schools and organizations offering innovative programs to address opioid substance abuse. HB-1007 ensures that a person lucky enough to have private insurance can begin treatment for an opioid addiction with help from their doctor before having to wrangle with pre-authorization for the needed medication. It also helps ensure that insurance companies will cover non-opioid treatments for chronic pain at the same level they cover pharmacological treatments. Finally, HB-1136 opens the possibility that Colorado can offer more needed in-patient and residential treatment to low-income individuals dealing with opioid substance use disorders.

All the faith traditions I know tells us that we are our sisters’ and brothers’ keepers, and no difference of opinion, political leanings, race, gender, sexuality, faith tradition, national origin, or state of mental



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All the faith traditions I know tells us that we are our sisters’ and brothers’ keepers, and no difference of opinion, political leanings, race, gender, sexuality, faith tradition, national origin, or state of mental

or physical health negates that responsibility. I respectfully ask that you help all Coloradans be good keepers of Coloradans in need by voting "Yes" to HB-1003, HB-1007, and HB-1136.



Sincerely,

*Amy*

Amy Petré Hill  
Director, Mental Health & Inclusion Ministries  
Mountain View United Church  
amy@mountainviewunitedchurch.org  
510.967.4890 (cell)

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**9 attachments**

-  **Kathie Northway.pdf**  
526K
-  **Marica Hall.pdf**  
446K
-  **Mark Paul.pdf**  
940K
-  **Mary Jo Baker.pdf**  
918K
-  **Njeri Kingnagi.pdf**  
635K
-  **Rev Dr Tracy Hughes.pdf**  
628K
-  **Ruth Delzell.pdf**  
878K
-  **Sandra Ghaffari.pdf**  
617K
-  **Wendi Witter.pdf**  
830K

February 17th 2018

Dear Members of the House Public Health Care  
and Human Services Committee

My name is Katie Norway and I  
am a member of Mountain View Church  
in Aurora. The people of my church and I care  
very much for the well being of Colorado. We are  
dismayed by what's happening in our community  
with opioid addiction. People need help and it seems  
that some insurance plans stand in their way.  
HB 18-1007. This bill ~~is~~ if passed will break down  
these barriers that people have to fight to get care  
alternatives to cheap, addictive opioid prescriptions.  
The bill will give people a choice.

Thank you -  
Katie Norway  
Aurora Co.

February 18, 2018

Dear Members of the House Public Health Care  
& Human Services Committee,

Hello, my name is Marcia Hall and I am a member of Mountain View United Church. As a person of faith, I care about the well-being of all Coloradans, including people struggling with behavior health challenges like such as opioid use disorders.

I am contacting you request that you vote YES on HB18-1007. I support this bill because we need to restrict use of opioids in our state.

~~Res~~ Respectfully,

Marcia J Hall  
5242 E. Dartmouth Ave  
Denver, CO 80222  
bournette@comcast.net

March 11, 2018

**Colorado House Public Health & Human Service Committee  
Colorado General Assembly  
200 E Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203**

Dear Colorado House Public Health Care & Human Services Committee Member,

I am a Colorado citizen and a member of Mountain View United Church. As a person of faith, I care about the well being of all Coloradans, including individuals and families struggling with behavioral health challenges, such as opioid abuse. That is why I strongly urge you to vote 'YES' to HB18-1003, HB18-1007, and HB 18-1136.

The rate of prescription opioid-related deaths has tripled in the past five years while fatal overdoses related to heroin—also an opioid—increased five times in that same period. HB18-1003, the Opioid Misuse Prevention Bill, will help legislators, researchers, and educators better understand opioid addiction and its treatment by creating a substance use disorders study committee in the Colorado General Assembly. This bill will also provide grants to school-based health care centers and organizations that can help address this behavioral health challenge through education, screenings, treatment, and referral programs.

HB18-1007, the Substance Use Disorder Payment and Coverage Bill, will ensure individuals seeking treatment for opioid addiction can immediately receive the medications they need by requiring insurance coverage of a five-day supply of buprenorphine without prior authorization once a year. It also empowers doctors to manage chronic pain without the use of opioids by prohibiting health insurance companies from requiring use of cheaper opioid drugs before prescribing non-opioid prescription painkillers.

Finally, I ask that you support HB18-1136, the Substance Use Disorder Treatment Bill, because it will make financial support for inpatient or residential treatment available to Coloradans seeking recovery from opioid addictions. I understand this can only occur once a federal authorization is received and those receiving funds from the Colorado medical assistance program for opioid addiction must meet nationally recognized criteria for inpatient or residential substance use disorder treatment.

Thank you for your leadership on addressing the opioid-abuse crisis in Colorado. Thank you for voting "YES" to HB18-1003, HB18-1007, and HB 18-1136.

Sincerely,

*Mark Auld*  
3650 S. BROADWAY #A-403  
EVELEWOOD, CO 80113

March 11, 2018

**Colorado House Public Health & Human Service Committee  
Colorado General Assembly  
200 E Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203**

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Thank you for your leadership on addressing the opioid-abuse crisis in Colorado. Thank you for voting "YES" to HB18-1003, HB18-1007, and HB 18-1136.

Sincerely,

  
12553 E. Pacific Cir #F  
Aurora CO 80014

To Members of the House I like that

Care & Human Services Committee

My name is R. NEEL KIRK and

I am a member of Mountain View United

Church. As a person of faith, I care

about the well-being

including people living

with depression and

health challenges of

children.

I can contacting you

on YES YES YES

because it is

bill. I support this

to prohibit insurance

companies from requiring a covered

person to undergo step therapy unless

a prescription is necessary for a

covered person before the covered person

is recommended by the covered person's

physician.

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Dear House Public Health Care & Human Services Committee

Also, I am Rev. Dr. James L. White, Lead Pastor  
of Mountain View United Church of Christ, Co. Co.

person of faith, leading a full community of care  
along with Lutheran, Pentecostal, people  
in spirit and in order.

I am contacting you to request that you vote  
"Yes" on HB18-1007. I support this bill because

many reasons are limiting access to pain medications that  
carry a lower risk of addiction or dependence, even as  
they provide comparably easy access to generic, low expense  
opioid medications. Passage of this bill will empower  
physicians to provide the most effective, least addictive  
medication appropriate for the treatment of a patient's  
suffering.

I help lead an elementary school church camp on  
the Brazos that serves kids from the Western Slope. Many  
of these kids suffer the most traumatic impact of opioid addiction  
of their parents. When communities are a cross of this crisis  
to drastically impacting the development of Colorado children.  
Please - vote "Yes" on HB18-1007.

Respectfully, Rev. Dr. James L. White

March 11, 2018

Colorado House Public Health & Human Service Committee  
Colorado General Assembly  
200 E Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Colorado House Public Health Care & Human Services Committee Member,

I am a Colorado citizen and a member of Mountain View United Church. As a person of faith, I care about the well being of all Coloradans, including individuals and families struggling with behavioral health challenges, such as opioid abuse. That is why I strongly urge you to vote 'YES' to HB18-1003, HB18-1007, and HB 18-1136.

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Thank you for your leadership on addressing the opioid-abuse crisis in Colorado. Thank you for voting "YES" to HB18-1003, HB18-1007, and HB 18-1136.

Sincerely,



RUTH DEZEE  
11361 E Kentucky Ave  
Aurora CO 80012

Feb. 2  
2018

To The House of Public Health  
Care & Human Services Committee

This letter comes to you from a registered  
independent voter from Denver Colorado.

As a member of Mountain View Church  
I am involved with and concerned  
about the health and well being of  
all my neighbors ... it's hard - we  
have so many needs and there are  
so many that live in compromised  
situations.

I am asking you to please vote  
Yes on HB18-1007 - because it will  
require all individual & group plans to  
provide coverage without prior author-  
ization for a 5-day supply of medication  
that can help to end an opioid addiction.

Thank you for your time: Stanley R. Chaffari  
Denver, 80210

Dear Committee,

3-9-18

I am concerned with mental health issues & the opioid crisis. As an elementary school teacher, & licensed clinical social worker, I have seen 1st hand how these issues impact people & my students.

Please vote yes on HB18-1003, HB18-1007, and HB18-1136. HB18-1003 will allow a study to be done of the issue & needs & provide grants to school-based health care centers to address the issues. HB18-1007 will allow individuals to get the meds they need for 5 days (buprenorphine) w/out prior authorization if deemed helpful by a physician. Also, HB18-1136 can provide financial support for inpatient treatment for recovery.

We know there is a serious problem, and we need your support on these issues to help people & their families who are suffering.

Sincerely,

Wendi Witter  
15572 W. 65th Ave. Unit A  
Arvada, CO 80007  
wendiwitter@gmail.com