



**TO: Members of the House Human Services Committee**

**FROM: Michele Denk, Executive Director, PACDAA**

**DATE: June 23, 2016**

**SUBJECT: House Bill 1692**

PACDAA, the Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators, appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and input regarding House Bill 1692. PACDAA represents 47 Single County Authorities (SCAs) in all 67 Pennsylvania counties. Single County Authorities are responsible for planning, delivering and evaluating comprehensive substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment services.

As an organization, we are compelled to share our concerns for House Bill 1692 regarding involuntary commitments to substance abuse treatment. While we support efforts to provide additional support and resources to families who face frustration and challenges of trying to help loved ones enter and remain in treatment for addiction, we believe that other options should be made available before considering an involuntary commitment process.

The response to an overdose should be the same as any other emergency medical intervention. Individuals who experience severe cardiac symptoms are not threatened with a civil commitment procedure if they choose to leave the emergency room and refuse additional treatment. We recognize the frustration of seeing overdose survivors refuse additional services after being revived with Naloxone and are committed to improving the response and warm-handoff with treatment.

SCA's and local hospitals and emergency personnel are working to improve our ability to engage overdose survivors in ongoing treatment. We believe additional resources dedicated to this process are better use of public funds than developing a new system for commitments and involuntary treatment.

We welcome the opportunity to participate in further discussion of this issue. Thank you.