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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2207
October 4, 2019

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND LABOR

RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HEALTH, EMPLOYMENT,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer
George W. Romney Building
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer:

As you know, our nation is reeling from a drug and opioid addiction epidemic that is destroying many families and cutting short far too many precious lives. This epidemic has hit the people of Michigan hard.

In Washington, fighting the battle against drug and opioid addiction has been an example of working in a bipartisan manner for the good of the nation and for the people that we all represent. In fact, Congresswoman Debbie Dingell and I introduced two pieces of legislation to help those struggling with addiction – two solutions for this crisis – that were included in a bipartisan package of legislation signed into law by President Trump on October 24, 2018.

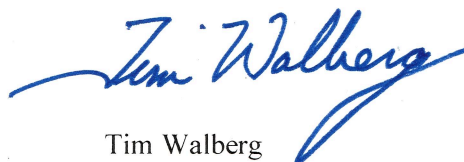
Earlier this year, I was pleased to see you attend the groundbreaking ceremony for Andy's Place Apartments, a long-term opioid rehabilitation home in Jackson, Michigan. At that event you stated, "The crisis that we're confronting as a state is powerful. It does not discriminate, it does not abate. We must fight it," and that "Andy's Place is going to be one of those places that changes lives and improves them for the better."

This week, I was disheartened to learn that you vetoed grant funding for this project, effectively stopping construction of the facility in its tracks. I write today to ask you what has changed in the four months since you stood on that stage on April 30, 2019, in front of families and friends who have lost loved ones to drug addiction, people on the path to recovery, and countless supportive members of the community?

According to the National Institutes of Health's most recent report, Michigan lost 2,033 people to this crisis just in one year alone. I sincerely hope that for the good of our community and our state you will seriously reconsider your veto, which undid the critical funding provided by the legislature and which you supported earlier this year. We cannot afford to play games with these lives.

If it would be helpful for you to have a review on the value of Andy's Place Apartments to the Jackson area and State of Michigan, I will be happy to convene a meeting with you and the stakeholders you celebrated with in April.

Sincerely,



Tim Walberg
Member of Congress

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Letter to Governor Whitmer

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cc: The Honorable Mike Shirkey
Majority Leader, Michigan Senate

cc: The Honorable Lee Chatfield
Speaker, Michigan House of Representatives