



National Association  
of Attorneys General

**Adopted**

**Summer Meeting  
Atlanta, Georgia  
June 18–21, 2007**

**RESOLUTION**

**CALLING FOR A BALANCED APPROACH TO PROMOTING PAIN RELIEF  
AND PREVENTING ABUSE OF PAIN MEDICATIONS**

**WHEREAS** the illegal diversion and abuse of prescription pain medications have claimed and ruined the lives of numerous citizens throughout this country and hundreds more have fallen victim to criminals who are forging prescriptions, robbing pharmacies, or committing other violent acts to gain access to these drugs; and,

**WHEREAS** prescription pain relief medications, when used as recommended by established pain management guidelines, are vitally important in the care of many patients; and,

**WHEREAS** the National Association of Attorneys General has continued its focus on understanding the roles and responsibilities of Attorneys General regarding the quality of end-of-life health care; and,

**WHEREAS** there is a consensus among law enforcement agencies, health care practitioners, and patient advocates that the prevention of drug abuse is an important societal goal that can and should be pursued without hindering proper patient care; and,

**WHEREAS** it is crucial that public health, law enforcement, and government officials continue to develop strategies and methods to prevent the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs, while safeguarding the right of those suffering from severe and chronic pain to continue to have access to appropriate medications; and,

**WHEREAS** the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and 21 health organizations, including the American Medical Association, the American Cancer Society and the American Pharmaceutical Association, have issued a joint statement emphasizing the importance of ensuring patient access to prescription pain medications while working to prevent abuse of those

medications and DEA reiterated its commitment to a balanced policy in its statement released on September 6, 2006; and,

**WHEREAS** the National Association of Attorneys General is continuing its dialogue with DEA to discover the best strategies and methods to implement a balanced pain policy:

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL:**

1. Endorses the “Joint Statement From 21 Health Organizations and the Drug Enforcement Administration, Promoting Pain Relief and Preventing Abuse of Pain Medications: A Critical Balancing Act.”

2. Encourages states to:

a. Ensure that such any programs or strategies implemented to reduce abuse of prescription pain medication are designed with attention to their potential impact on the legitimate use of prescription drugs;

b. Ensure that such programs or strategies contain the appropriate confidentiality and access controls;

c. Allocate the resources necessary to thoroughly implement effective strategies and approaches to address the abuse and diversion of prescription drugs if appropriate; and

3. Calls upon Congress, in considering the problem of prescription drug abuse, to:

a. Recognize the vital role played by state and local governmental, regulatory, and law enforcement officials in utilizing and creating state laws, regulations, and programs to protect citizens from prescription drug abuse;

b. Refrain from enacting federal laws or regulations that would in any way preempt or impair the ability of state and local officials to address the unique needs of their communities when developing approaches to eradicate the problem of prescription drug abuse;

c. Provide additional grant money to initiate the development of prescription monitoring programs or other effective strategies to those states that decide to institute such initiatives, and;

4. Urges the Administration and the United States Attorney General to:

a. Continue to coordinate enforcement efforts with state and local law enforcement to combat prescription drug abuse and diversion;

b. Authorize additional grant funds to enable states to develop, implement, and maintain effective strategies should they deem them appropriate in their jurisdictions, and

c. Authorizes the Executive Director of the National Association of Attorneys General to transmit these views to the Administration, key members of Congress, and other relevant entities and to work with the U.S. Department of Justice, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, and other law enforcement and regulatory entities on initiatives consistent with this resolution and with the needs of the Attorneys General.