



August 31, 2015

Hon. Rona Ambrose
Minister of Health
Health Canada
Brooke Claxton Building
70 Colombine Driveway, Tunney's Pasture
Address Locator 0900C2
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Canada

Dear Minister Ambrose,

As the Governors of New England, we are deeply concerned about the threat to public health from the abuse of prescription drugs. This is an issue of grave concern to both our nations. We commend the work you and your government have undertaken as part of Canada's National Anti-Drug Strategy. In particular, we support your recent initiatives to enhance surveillance, prescribing guidelines and pharmacy inspections which mirror initiatives in the United States.

In addition, we also note with great interest and support your recent comments about your federal government's plans to institute new regulations to ensure that all controlled-release oxycodone products, and eventually all controlled-release prescription opioids in the Canadian marketplace meet stringent tamper-resistant/abuse-deterrent guidelines.

As you are aware, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved four products with these features and is presently reviewing several more. Such measures are a critically important tool and policy intervention in our strategy to address prescription drug abuse and complement the work of clinicians, pharmacists, law enforcement, front-line drug abuse workers and ultimately patients in responsibly addressing chronic pain while reducing the misuse, abuse and diversion potential of these powerful medicines.

We urge you to enact these regulations on accelerated timeline that will continue to align the regulatory approaches of both the FDA and Health Canada in this vitally important public health and safety issue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/o.s./

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor of Connecticut

/o.s./

Paul R. LePage
Governor of Maine

/o.s./

Charles D. Baker
Governor of Massachusetts

/o.s./

Margaret Wood Hassan
Governor of New Hampshire

/o.s./

Gina Raimondo
Governor of Rhode Island

/o.s./

Peter Shumlin
Governor of Vermont