



Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

Strength in Numbers 95,000

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LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

CONGRESSMAN TOM MARINO IS NOT THE MAN FOR THE JOB

President Trump has nominated Marino (“the chief advocate of the law that hobbled the DEA”) * to be the next drug czar

(*According to an investigative report by the “Washington Post” and “60 Minutes”)

Rep. Tom Marino has informed the President that he is withdrawing his name from consideration as drug czar

Pa. Congressman Tom Marino and the drug industry's triumph over the DEA

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By [The Washington Post](http://www.pennlive.com/nation-world/2017/10/senator_wants_trump_to_pull_ma.html) view and read entire article at: http://www.pennlive.com/nation-world/2017/10/senator_wants_trump_to_pull_ma.html

According to the article in April 2016, at the height of the deadliest drug epidemic in U.S. history, Congress effectively stripped the Drug Enforcement Administration of its most potent weapon against large drug companies suspected of spilling prescription narcotics onto the nation's streets. By then, the opioid war had claimed 200,000 lives, more than three times the number of U.S. military deaths in the Vietnam War. Overdose deaths continue to rise. There is no end in sight.

A handful of members of Congress, allied with the nation's major drug distributors, prevailed upon the DEA and the Justice Department to agree to a more **industry-friendly law**, undermining efforts to stanch the flow of pain pills, according to an investigation by The Washington Post and "60 Minutes." The DEA had opposed the effort for years.

The law was the crowning achievement of a multifaceted campaign by the drug industry to weaken aggressive DEA enforcement efforts against drug distribution

companies that were supplying corrupt doctors and pharmacists who peddled narcotics to the black market. The industry worked behind the scenes with lobbyists and key members of Congress, pouring more than a million dollars into their election campaigns.

The article goes on to state that “The chief advocate of the law that hobbled the DEA was Rep. Tom Marino, a Pennsylvania Republican who is now President Trump's nominee to become the nation's next drug czar. Marino spent years trying to move the law through Congress. It passed after Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) negotiated a final version with the DEA.”

The article further stated that “Political action committees representing the industry contributed at least \$1.5 million to the 23 lawmakers who sponsored or co-sponsored four versions of the bill, including nearly \$100,000 to Marino and \$177,000 to Hatch. Overall, the drug industry spent \$106 million lobbying Congress on the bill and other legislation between 2014 and 2016, according to lobbying reports.”



[Gov. Wolf: 'I have serious doubts' about Pa. congressman's nomination at Trump's drug czar](#)

"I have serious doubts now whether Congressman Marino can serve as the nation's top official on drug policy."

According to the [Centers for Disease Control](#), opioid overdoses claim 91 lives per day in America, and the number of overdose deaths associated with opioids has quadrupled since 1999.

Lawsuits have been filed by many states, cities, and even Native American nations. Even the Teamsters are at the forefront battling this crisis. The Teamsters union called on shareholders of drug giant Cardinal Health to strip the company's top executive of his duties as board chairman, saying the firm is "in the midst of a corporate crisis" over its role in the opioid epidemic that has ravaged West Virginia and other states. The PA Conference is certain that every one of our members knows someone that has overdosed on prescription opiates and are also aware of the fact that addition to opiates opens the door to heroin addiction. We need a drug czar that will put the people's health, safety and welfare above multi-billion-dollar drug companies.

PRESS RELEASE: U.S. Senator Joe Manchin WV - OCTOBER 16, 2017

MANCHIN ANNOUNCES LEGISLATIVE REPEAL FOR 2016 LAW PREVENTING AGGRESSIVE DEA ENFORCEMENT OF OPIOID DISTRIBUTORS AND MANUFACTURERS

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) today introduced legislation repealing the *Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act of 2016* after the Washington Post report indicated that the legislation has dramatically restricted the ability of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to crack down on opioid distributors and manufacturers suspected of wrongdoing.

"I am horrified by how harmful this bill has been for our efforts to effectively fight the opioid epidemic and now it's time to make it right," **Senator Manchin**. "I introduced legislation to repeal this horrible bill and reinstate the DEA's ability to stop opioid distributors and manufacturers who are endangering the American people. The DEA is one of our first lines of defense against this all-consuming disease. West Virginia's families and communities deserve a DEA that will protect them, not pharmaceutical companies."

To read the letter Senator Manchin sent to the White House [click here](#).

The 2016 bill purported to "improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse" by altering DEA procedures for revoking or suspending registrations for opioid distributors under the Controlled Substances Act. However, the effect of these changes, according to reports, has been to significantly curtail the ability of DEA to bring enforcement actions against drug distributors and manufacturers.

Manchin also sent a letter to the White House demanding that Rep. Tom Marino's nomination be pulled from consideration to lead the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. He urged swift action in response to the Washington Post article outlining Rep. Marino's involvement in passing a bill weakening the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) authority to stop companies from distributing opioids.