

we need to meet them where they are and give them the resources necessary to use drugs safely.”

“As the CEO of a free, behavioral, outpatient addiction treatment facility, and representative of the entire staff, the board of directors, and the 2,000-plus patients that we service every year, I wholeheartedly endorse the Comprehensive Addiction Resources Emergency (CARE) Act and will do whatever is necessary to help it become a reality,” said Dan Hostetler, CEO of the Above and Beyond Family Recovery Center in Chicago.

“We cannot end the HIV epidemic in the U.S. without also addressing substance use. People who are struggling with substance use disorder deserve to have the support they need to reach their best health outcomes, and in turn this can help us to prevent new HIV transmissions,” said Omar Martinez Gonzalez of the AIDS Foundation Chicago.

And from Petros Levounis, M.D., then outgoing president of the American Psychiatric Association at the time the bill was reintroduced: “Addiction is at a crisis level in the United States, but it is a crisis we can meet with strong efforts around prevention, treatment and recovery. We are pleased to support the Comprehensive Addiction Resources Emergency (CARE) Act, which will help combat this public health emergency through local and state substance use disorder grants, programs and workforce development.”

“The American Psychological Association applauds Senator Elizabeth Warren for reintroducing the Comprehensive Addiction Resources Emergency Act,” said APA CEO Arthur C. Evans Jr., PhD. “APA supports the population health-based approach of this legislation for how we better address mental health and substance use issues in our nation. The bill recognizes the need to prioritize ‘upstream services,’ and promotes prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support ser-

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I wish we had met under different circumstances!

By Rob Kent

I am convinced that I would have met Avi and Julie Israel, Linda Ventura, and so many others and become friends in the normal flow of life! I am also convinced that I would have met Stephanie Campbell and Ashley Livingston and so many others who found recovery and have helped others on their paths! The reality is, we met because I work on drug policy, and they lost their children and loved ones to overdose and addiction, or, they found their way to recovery and work to help others find their way.

I know that meeting all these wonderful people has made my work and my life better! Sometimes, I do wonder what would have happened if we had not met under these circumstances! For one, Michael Israel and Thomas Ventura, and so many others, would still be here! I hear often that we are only given that which we can handle. I believe that we are given what we are given and we either handle it or we do not!

I have had others who work on drug policy ask me to “talk” to Avi, Linda, Stephanie, Ashley and others about “toning it down.” My response has always been: NOT A CHANCE!! I ask them how they would conduct themselves if they had lost a child or a loved one! I also offer them my opinion (based on my experience) that the passion and commitment of those who have lost a loved one, or help others find their way to recovery, have been the most critical reason that we have made any progress towards preventing overdose and death.

I also know that the ability to make an impact is more about relationships and less about having the best argument! Developing relationships allows you the opportunity to make your best argument and allows you to make an impact!

Working on drug policy during a multi-staged overdose epidemic has been the most fulfilling work of my career! It has also broken my heart many times! What keeps me going is my belief that those who died from overdose mattered, their families matter, those who find recovery matter and those seeking recovery matter!

I also tell myself that we would have met and become friends regardless!

While I wish we had met under different circumstances, I will never regret having met you, and I thank you for being a part of my life! •

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FROM THE FIELD...