

Opioids commission recommends that Trump declare a national emergency

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The White House commission on opioid addiction has recommended that President Donald Trump declare a national emergency over the epidemic that each day kills dozens of Americans.

"Your declaration would empower your Cabinet to take bold steps and would force Congress to focus on funding and empowering the Executive Branch even further to deal with this loss of life," the Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis wrote in its interim report, released Monday. "It would also awaken every American to this simple fact: If this scourge has not found you or your family yet, without bold action by everyone, it soon will."

The commission, led by Chris Christie, the Republican governor of New Jersey, was created in March and charged with studying ways to combat and treat [drug abuse](#), [addiction](#) and the opioid crisis. Citing data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the commission said the epidemic claims an average of 142 lives a day.

"We must act boldly to stop it," the commission wrote. "The opioid epidemic we are facing is unparalleled."

Between 1999 and 2015, more than 560,000 people in the United States died due to drug overdoses, a death toll larger than the population of Atlanta. In 2015, nearly two-thirds of [drug overdoses](#) were linked to opioids, including Percocet, OxyContin, heroin and fentanyl. There were more than 50,000 deaths from drug abuse and addiction in 2015, according to figures released by the White House when the commission was created.

The commission offered several other recommendations. They include increasing the capacity for treatment, mandating education initiatives for prescribers, establishing and funding a national incentive to enhance access to medically assisted treatment, and prioritizing funding and manpower for the Department of Homeland Security and [law enforcement agencies](#) to fight the trafficking and distribution of fentanyl.

"In our final report, we will provide an additional set of detailed recommendations that, if implemented, will ensure that the federal government operates as a strong partner in the fight against addiction and the [opioid](#) crisis," the commission said.

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