For Immediate Release
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U.S. Senate Passage of Addiction and Recovery Act Could Address Challenges in Iowa

DES MOINES – Director of the Iowa Department of Public Health, Gerd Clabaugh, and Iowa Drug Policy Coordinator, Steve Lukan, provided the following joint statement on today’s passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) by the U.S. Senate:

“This landmark legislation, a comprehensive response to the devastating impact of opioid and other drug abuse in Iowa and the rest of the nation, would leverage health care, law enforcement, and substance abuse prevention and treatment services to reverse current trends.

CARA would help address growing needs experienced by many Iowa communities by: expanding drug prevention and education efforts; boosting use of the opioid overdose rescue drug naloxone to save lives; adding resources for substance abuse treatment, including specialized opioid treatment for those addicted to prescription painkillers or heroin; strengthening prescription monitoring programs to reduce medicine diversion and abuse; and increasing the number of Take Back sites for properly disposing of unused prescription drugs.

We applaud today’s action which was supported by both Senator Grassley and Senator Ernst. This positive action is due in large part to the leadership and input of Iowa Senator Charles Grassley, who held a hearing on the bill in the Senate Judiciary Committee he chairs before managing it on the Senate floor. He also worked to ensure the bill addresses needs in rural areas as well as methamphetamine abuse issues, in addition to the growing abuse of opioids, all of which are challenges we face in Iowa.”