REQUESTING THAT THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR STUDY PATIENT ACCESS TO PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF ABUSE-DETERRENT OPIOID ANALGESICS.

WHEREAS, prescription opioids are powerful pain medications that are also highly addictive; and

WHEREAS, opioid dependence affects nearly five million (5,000,000) people in the United States and leads to approximately seventeen thousand (17,000) deaths annually; and

WHEREAS, an ongoing debate revolves around the long-term use of opioids in the treatment of chronic, nonmalignant pain; and

WHEREAS, abuse and misuse of opioid medications remains a public health challenge, with abuse rates having quadrupled from 1990 to 2000; and

WHEREAS, more than seventy percent (70%) of nonmedical users obtain opioids from family or friends and are seeking to achieve a "high" from prescription opioids by taking an excess number of pills or by crushing the pills and snorting, smoking, or injecting the new altered formulation; and

WHEREAS, prescription opioids’ continuation as a pain treatment and their association with abuse and addiction create a need for risk mitigation approaches that optimize the risk-benefit ratio; and

WHEREAS, abuse-deterrent opioid analgesics have emerged as a means for supporting prescription opioid access while limiting abuse and the consequences of abuse; and

WHEREAS, different types of abuse-deterrent opioid analgesic include physical and chemical barriers to tampering, agonist-antagonist formulations, aversion, prodrugs, and alternative methods of administration; and
WHEREAS, each type of abuse-deterrent opioid analgesics has the potential to reduce specific forms of prescription opioid abuse and addiction; and

WHEREAS, for numerous reasons, the State of Arkansas should strongly support efforts to reduce abuse and misuse of opioid medications,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT PROPOSED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the House Committee On Public Health, Welfare, and Labor shall study patient access to prescription opioids and the potential impact of abuse-deterrent opioid analgesics on diversion, misuse, and abuse of extended-release opioids to include without limitation:

1. A review of literature, including product labeling studies, examining the impact of abuse-deterrent opioid analgesics on healthcare utilization, including without limitation emergency room visits, hospitalizations, outpatient visits, substance-abuse treatment services, pharmaceutical costs, infectious disease costs, and overall healthcare costs;

2. The health insurance coverage in this state, including without limitation cost-sharing requirements, prior authorization, step-therapy, and other utilization management requirements, for:
   - (A) Brand name and generic opioids approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration as abuse-deterrent opioid analgesics;
   - (B) Brand name and generic opioids with abuse-deterrent properties which are not approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for deterrence labeling; and
   - (C) Brand name and generic opioids with nonabuse-deterrent properties and other nonabuse deterrents;

3. A comparison of out-of-pocket expenses for each type of abuse-deterrent opioid analgesic to individuals with health insurance policies in this state; and

4. A summary of guidance documentation published on abuse-deterrent opioid analgesics by the United States Food and Drug Administration.
BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor shall report its findings and submit any recommendations for legislation to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate no later than February 1, 2016.

BE IT FURTHER PROPOSED THAT, upon request, the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, and healthcare licensing boards shall aid the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor in this study.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Justin Boyd
District 77

By: JMB/JMB