Democratic Platform:

**Combating Drug and Alcohol Addiction**
We must confront the epidemic of drug and alcohol addiction, specifically the opioid crisis and other drugs plaguing our communities, by vastly expanding access to prevention and treatment, supporting recovery, helping community organizations, and promoting better practices by prescribers. The Democratic Party is committed to assisting the estimated 20 million people struggling with addiction in this country to find and sustain healthy lives by encouraging full recovery and integration into society and working to remove common barriers to gainful employment, housing, and education. We will continue to fight to expand access to care for addiction services, and ensure that insurance coverage is equal to that for any other health conditions. We think it is time for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Labor, and state regulatory agencies to fully implement the protections of the Mental Health Parity and Addictions Equity Act of 2008—which means that American medical insurers, including the federal government, will need to disclose how they make their medical management decisions.

Republican Platform:

**Combatting Drug Abuse**
The progress made over the last three decades against drug abuse is eroding, whether for cultural reasons or for lack of national leadership. In many jurisdictions, marijuana is virtually legalized despite its illegality under federal law. At the other end of the drug spectrum, heroin use nearly doubled from 2003 to 2013, while deaths from heroin have quadrupled. All this highlights the continuing conflicts and contradictions in public attitudes and public policy toward illegal substances. Congress and a new administration should consider the long-range implications of these trends for public health and safety and prepare to deal with the problematic consequences.

The misuse of prescription painkillers—opioids—is a related problem. Heroin and opioid abuse touches our communities, our homes, and our families in ways that have grave effects on Americans in every community. With a quadrupling of both their sales and their overdose deaths, the opioid crisis is ravaging communities all over the country, often hitting rural areas harder than urban. Because over-prescription of drugs is such a large part of the problem, Republican legislation now allows Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage plans to limit patients to a single pharmacy. Congressional Republicans have also called upon the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to ensure that no physician will be penalized for limiting opioid prescriptions. We look for expeditious agreement between the House and Senate on the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, which addresses the opioid epidemic from both the demand and supply sides of the problem.