



## **Statement**

**The following statement should be attributed to Gary Mendell, CEO and Founder of Shatterproof.**

“Today’s Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on America’s Epidemic of Heroin and Prescription Drug Abuse was another important step forward to end the epidemic of opioid addiction in the US.

We applaud the Committee for focusing on this critical issue as well as US Senators Richard Blumenthal, Jeanne Shaheen, Rob Portman and Kelly Ayotte, Governor Peter Shumlin and leaders across the country who testified in hopes of slowing the opioid addiction that is crippling communities and families around the country. Every day that we wait for meaningful guidelines from the federal government, we lose 52 people to their opioid addiction.

The CDC recently released 2014 data that reported 10,547 deaths from heroin overdoses and 18,893 died from opioid overdoses. This is not a single year phenomenon, but an unfortunate and growing trend. From 2002 to 2013, heroin related deaths increased by 286%.

I am a father who has had the anguish of having to bury his first-born son, who was addicted to opioids. We must put an end to these senseless deaths, which is why I will testify tomorrow before the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and will urge them to immediately issue these lifesaving guidelines on prescribing opioids. There is strong consensus that the recommendations that the CDC made last year struck the right balance between curbing the over-prescribing of highly addictive opioids while allowing truly sick and deserving patients to get the pain medication they need. The CDC must not bow to pressure from special interest organizations by watering down its recommendations.”



STRONGER THAN ADDICTION

*About Shatterproof:*

Shatterproof is a national organization committed to protecting loved ones from addiction to illicit and prescription drugs, and alcohol, and ending the stigma and suffering of those affected by this disease. Shatterproof provides information and resources for those living with addiction and their families, enabling powerful new evidence based approaches to prevention, treatment and recovery, and takes the issue to the steps of Capitol Hill.

**To interview Gary Mendell, the CEO and Founder of Shatterproof, please contact Stephanie Reichin at 617.549.3745 or [SReichin@SKDKnick.com](mailto:SReichin@SKDKnick.com)**