

April 17, 2019

The Honorable Tina Smith  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

The Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), is pleased to express our strong support for the Mental Health Services for Students Act of 2019, S. 1122.

The MHLG is a coalition of national organizations representing consumers, family members, mental health and addiction providers, advocates, payers and other stakeholders committed to strengthening Americans' access to mental health and addiction care. As trusted leaders in the field, our 70+ member organizations are dedicated to elevating the national conversation around mental health and addiction.

Your legislation, S. 1122, will provide federal support to assist local communities and schools with health providers who can effectively support our nation's youth in dealing with trauma and violence by increasing funding through Project AWARE and strengthening school-based resources for students. We value initiatives like yours, that incentivize local partnerships and positive behavioral interventions to create a new culture that places the value of mental health at the forefront of student success. MHLG appreciates your efforts on these issues and employing a community wide approach to give students the best possible outcomes to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

As you know, there is strong research that links the mental, social and emotional health of students to their academic achievement. MHLG recognizes the critical role of safe, encouraging school environments to maximize student academic outcomes and that non-academic concerns, such as bullying, violence, and threats of violence can harm a student's ability to focus on school work. All students, regardless of socioeconomic status, deserve access to well-trained mental health professionals within schools and we commend your strong leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

2020Moms  
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Art Therapy Association  
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry  
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work  
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Counseling Association  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention/SPAN USA  
American Group Psychotherapy Association  
American Mental Health Counselors Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychoanalytic Association  
American Psychological Association  
Anxiety and Depression Association of America  
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare  
Association for Behavioral & Cognitive Therapies  
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness  
Campaign for Trauma Informed Policy and Practice  
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder  
Cities Thrive Mental Health Coalition  
Clinical Social Work Association  
Confederation of Independent Psychoanalytic Societies  
Council on Social Work Education  
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance  
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action  
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice  
Kennedy Forum  
Mental Health America  
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association for Rural Mental Health  
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors  
National Board for Certified Counselors  
National Council for Behavioral Health  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Eating Disorders Association  
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
National League for Nursing  
National Register of Health Service Psychologists  
Psychotherapy Action Network  
Sandy Hook Promise  
School Based Health Alliance  
School Social Work Association of America  
The Trevor Project  
Treatment Communities of America  
Trust for America's Health