

November 12, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leaders Schumer, Speaker Johnson, Leader McConnell, and Leader Jeffries,

On behalf of the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), a coalition of national organizations representing individuals and families experiencing mental health and substance use challenges, mental health and substance use treatment providers, advocates and other stakeholders committed to strengthening access to high-quality mental and behavioral health care, **we write to urge action on mental health and substance use care this Congress.**

We strongly recommend enactment of full year appropriations bills for FY 2025 as soon as possible at the funding levels reported by the Senate Committee on Appropriations including—the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (S. 4942). We also strongly urge the reauthorization of the *Substance Use Disorder Prevention That Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act* (SUPPORT Act) (H.R. 4531/S. 3393) to address the nations’ rising rate of fentanyl and substance use.

We applaud the hard work of both chambers in moving FY25 funding through their respective committees. As Congress looks to finalize FY25 appropriations, we appreciate the continued bipartisan support of our nation’s worsening mental health, substance use and suicide crisis, with far too many Americans facing a critical lack of access to lifesaving support, treatment and care. Growing demands on a strained workforce, financial barriers, lack of access, and stigma related to treatment have contributed to this emergency. The country is facing record levels of suicide and high overdose deaths, and more than 123 million Americans live in a federally designated Mental Health Provider Shortage Area.

The MHLG also urges Congress to reauthorize the bipartisan provisions of the *Substance Use Disorder Prevention That Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act* (SUPPORT) Act which expired September 30, 2023. To effectively address the substance use epidemic, Congress should ensure policies for both funding and authorizations to integrate co-occurring mental health conditions to provide the most cost effective and successful outcomes to battle the rising rates of both substance use disorder and behavioral health conditions.

There is no time to waste; Congress must act now to avert preventable deaths due to substance use disorder and mental health conditions. We stand ready to serve as a resource if there are any questions. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists

American Association on Health and Disability

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Mental Health Counselors Association

American Therapeutic Recreation Association

Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare

Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Children's Hospital Association

Clinical Social Work Association

Crisis Residential Association

Global Alliance for Behavioral Health & Social Justice

Inseparable

International OCD Foundation

International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses

Legal Action Center

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of Peer Supporters

National Association of Social Workers

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

National Council for Mental Wellbeing

National League for Nursing

Psychotherapy Action Network

REDC Consortium

Sandy Hook Promise

SMART Recovery

School Social Work Association of America

The Jed Foundation

The Kennedy Forum

The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health

The Trevor Project

Tourette Association of America

Trust for America's Health

Western Youth Services

CC: Chair Murray and Vice Chair Collins, Chair Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Sanders and Ranking Member Cassidy, Chair McMorris Rogers and Ranking Member Pallone.