

March 21, 2022

Mr. Carlos Elizondo
White House Social Secretary
The White House, East Wing
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Elizondo:

As leading advocacy organizations and professional associations dedicated to improving outcomes for people living with mental health conditions and substance use disorders, we are writing to inquire about a special request for Mental Health Awareness Month this May. We would like to formally ask that you consider joining our organizations in observing Mental Health Awareness Month by lighting The White House green on May 1, 2022.

We recognize that White House lightings for awareness months occur on extraordinarily rare occasions, typically for Breast Cancer Awareness Month and Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. We also recognize that those months align with the administration's Cancer Moonshot initiative. However, given President Biden's [recent announcement of a strategy to address our national mental health crisis](#) as part of his unity agenda in his first State of the Union, we feel that a lighting for Mental Health Awareness Month would also align well with his current priorities.

Further, we feel that a White House lighting would be a great opportunity for the administration to draw continued attention to the [U.S. Surgeon General's rare advisory](#) on addressing the nation's youth mental health crisis. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health challenges were the leading cause of disability and poor life outcomes in young people, and the pandemic only added to those pre-existing challenges.

The purpose of Mental Health Awareness Month, observed during May since 1949, is to educate the public about mental health conditions, encourage people to get screened, and reduce the stigma that surrounds these conditions. One in five Americans will experience a mental health condition in a given year, and 50% of Americans will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime. For this reason, it is critically important that those experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition know what to look for and that Americans are educated during the month of May about how a mental health condition feels.

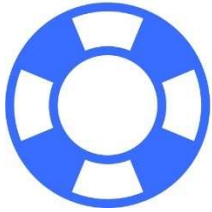
We hope you will consider joining with us to observe the occasion by lighting the White House on May 1, 2022 in green – the awareness color for the month. We feel that this would align well with the administration's current agenda, draw attention to the Surgeon General's advisory, and raise awareness among the public about mental health conditions, ultimately saving lives.

Sincerely,

Schneider Stiboring



Robert Bellini



**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**

Arthur C. Evans, PhD.



**AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION**

Charles Ingoglieri

**NATIONAL COUNCIL
for Mental Wellbeing**

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Daniel H. Gillman, Jr.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Danna Mauch



John S.

**National Association
for Behavioral Healthcare**

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Lisa Dailey



Paul Devins MD, MPH



Karen Fara



Brandon Duglin



Tyler & [Signature]

