

Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage

June 15, 2007

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage, we are writing to offer our unequivocal support for the manager's amendment to S.558, The Mental Health Parity Act of 2007. It is a solid bill that will provide equitable coverage for those with mental and substance use disorders.

The Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage applauds your efforts in moving the parity issue forward and the steadfast commitment to bipartisanship and broad stakeholder engagement that have made that possible. We believe the manager's amendment furnished to our organizations on June 13th is a very strong measure that will close the gaps in the 1996 Act by barring disparate financial requirements and treatment limitations currently applied to patients with mental and substance use disorders. We firmly support the manager's amendment and hope to see the Senate pass it in the coming weeks.

To that end, we are deeply committed to continuing to work with you to bring the manager's amendment successfully to the Senate floor. In order to best ensure Senate passage we will neither seek changes nor support unacceptable or weakening amendments to the bill as it moves through the Senate. We will remain committed to the bipartisan approach that produced this legislation and will continue to work with business, insurance, and other stakeholders as this legislation moves forward.

We are grateful for the opportunity to work with your offices and the employer and insurance communities to develop this historic bi-partisan mental health parity bill. This bill will provide equitable coverage for those with mental and substance use disorders and extend these protections to millions of employed Americans who are now in self-insured plans, to which state mental health parity laws do not currently apply.

Sincerely,

American Hospital Association
American Medical Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Federation of American Hospitals
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems

Mental illness coverage. It's time to be fair by treating it equally in health care.

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