

# Mental Health Liaison Group

July 16, 2008

The Honorable Pete Stark  
239 Cannon House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller  
2205 Rayburn House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Stark and Miller:

The undersigned national organizations in the Mental Health Liaison Group are pleased to write in support of The Healthy Transitions Act, H.R. 6375.

According to the Government Accountability Office, an estimated 2.4 million youth within transition ages (18 to 26) have a serious mental health disorder. Although this population is not unique in experiencing difficulties as they transition to adulthood, they are more likely than their peers to experience poor outcomes, including areas of employment and education. Left without access to necessary services and supports, successful transitions to adulthood cannot be realized. The Healthy Transitions Act would help young adults with a serious mental health disorder obtain vital resources, knowledge and skills necessary for adulthood.

The Healthy Transitions Act would establish planning and implementation grants to States to assist in the development of a coordinated service delivery system to maximize continuity of care and access to services. Young adults who are transitioning to the adult mental health system will be able to benefit from the infrastructure that would be developed to access such services as peer support programs, independent living and life support skills as well as employment, housing and education supports. Additionally, H.R. 6375 would establish a committee of federal partners to help coordinate the myriad of federal programs that assist young adults with a mental disorder and provide technical assistance to States as they implement their plans.

We applaud your ongoing leadership in the mental health arena, and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues to enact the Healthy Transitions Act.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Children and Families  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry  
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy  
American Association of Pastoral Counselors  
American Counseling Association  
American Group Psychotherapy Association  
American Mental Health Counselors Association

National organizations representing consumers, family members, advocates, professionals and providers  
c/o Laurel Stine, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, 1101 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, #1212, Washington, DC 20005

American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychoanalytic Association  
American Psychological Association  
Anxiety Disorders Association of America  
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare  
Association for the Advancement of Psychology  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Child Welfare League of America  
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder  
Clinical Social Work Association  
Clinical Social Work Guild  
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Mental Health America  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Alliance to End Homelessness  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental  
Disability Directors  
National Association of Mental Health Planning and Advisory Councils  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors  
National Coalition of Mental Health Consumer/Survivor Organizations  
National Coalition of Mental Health Professionals and Consumers, Inc.  
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare  
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
Suicide Prevention Action Network USA  
United Jewish Communities  
U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association  
Witness Justice