

# Mental Health Liaison Group

June 26, 2001

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator  
SD-332 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

The undersigned members of the Mental Health Liaison Group are pleased to write in support of the Mental Health Access Act, legislation that you offered in the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress as S. 3238.

The Mental Health Access Act addresses the serious problem of the inability of persons with mental disorders to obtain insurance coverage in the individual market. Too often persons with a preexisting mental disorder are denied coverage or asked to pay excessively high premiums for coverage.

Your bill limits any preexisting condition exclusion relating to a mental health condition to not more than 12 months; prohibits individual market insurers from imposing such exclusions unless the applicant has been diagnosed or treated within the previous six months; and prohibits these insurers from charging higher premiums of applicants with mental health conditions.

We appreciate your work on this important issue of insurance discrimination and look forward to helping win passage of the Mental Health Access 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 for Psychosocial Rehabilitation  
American Association of Pastoral Counselors  
American Association of Private Practice Psychiatrists  
American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work  
American Counseling Association  
American Family Foundation  
American Group Psychotherapy Association  
American Mental Health Counselors Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Orthopsychiatric Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association

National organizations representing consumers, family members, advocates, professionals and providers  
c/o Peter Newbould, American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002

American Psychological Association  
Anxiety Disorders Association of America  
Association for the Advancement of Psychology  
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder  
Child Welfare League of America  
Clinical Social Work Federation  
Corporation for the Advancement of Psychiatry  
Federation of Behavioral, Psychological & Cognitive Sciences  
Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
MentalHealth AMERICA, Inc.  
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill  
National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders -- ANAD  
National Association of Counties  
National Association of County Behavioral Health Directors  
National Association of Mental Health Planning & Advisory Councils  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare  
National Depressive and Manic-Depressive Association  
National Mental Health Association  
Tourette Syndrome Association