Mental Health Liaison Group

November 14, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Minority Leader
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the undersigned national organizations, we are writing to strongly urge you to bring up and swiftly pass comprehensive mental health reform legislation this year.

We applaud the work of the Senate HELP Committee, which unanimously approved S. 2680, the Mental Health Reform Act, in April. The House has also shown their strong, bipartisan support for mental health by passing H.R 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act by a vote of 422-2 in July.

These bills have been developed with the broad support of the mental health advocacy community. It is past time that we move these solutions forward and into law. We cannot afford to wait another year or another Congress to take action.

We have a mental health crisis in this country. Over 68 million Americans have experienced a mental health or substance use disorder in the past year, but half did not get any mental health care in the past year. America's suicide rate is the highest it's been in 30 years, and the rates of homelessness, incarceration, and disability as a result of untreated and undiagnosed mental and behavioral health conditions continue to rise.

S. 2680 and H.R. 2646 will improve the coordination of federal mental health resources, combat suicide, increase early access to mental health services, address our growing workforce shortage, advance integrated health care delivery, and strengthen mental health parity. And we need your leadership to pass and resource these critical policies by this year's end.

Thank you for your consideration. We are eager to stand with you to pass the solutions we need this year and improve the lives of millions of Americans impacted by mental and behavioral health conditions.

Sincerely,
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Art Therapy Association
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association on Health and Disability *
American Dance Therapy Association
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Group Psychotherapy Association
American Mental Health Counselors Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Orthopsychiatric Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Clinical Social Work Association
Clinical Social Work Guild 49
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Eating Disorders Coalition
Emergency Nurses Association
The Jewish Federations of North America
Lakeshore Foundation **
Mental Health America
National Alliance to End Homelessness
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Health Care for the Homeless Council *
National League for Nursing
The National MS Society *
The National Register of Health Service Psychologists
No Health without Mental Health
Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association and Foundation
Sandy Hook Promise
School Social Work Association of America
Tourette Association of America
The Trevor Project
Trinity Health *

*Affiliate Member
**not MHLG member