

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chairman
House Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott, Chairman
House Committee on Education & Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal, Chairman
House Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Chairman Neal, and Chairman Scott:

The undersigned national organizations dedicated to strengthening Americans' access to mental and behavioral health care within the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), representing consumers, families, advocates and providers, write to applaud you for your legislation, the *Protecting Pre-Existing Conditions and Making Health Care Affordable Act of 2019*. The MHLG is a coalition of national organizations representing consumers, family members, mental health and addiction providers, advocates, payers and other stakeholders committed to strengthening Americans' access to mental health and addiction care. As trusted leaders in the field, our 80+ member organizations are dedicated to elevating the national conversation around mental health and addiction.

This legislation is a vital step to comprehensively ensuring higher quality health coverage at lower costs. Additionally, it protects the vulnerable patient populations with mental health and substance use disorders by ensuring health insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions and comprehensive coverage for the Essential Health Benefits.

The prevalence of mental health and substance use disorders in the United States is alarming. According to the National Institutes of Mental Health, one in five adults in the United States experienced a mental or behavioral health problem in the past year alone. Untreated mental health disorders can lead to a host of adverse consequences, including homelessness, unemployment, contact with the criminal or juvenile justice system and suicide in addition to an array of co-morbid health conditions, being why ensuring comprehensive health coverage for this patient population is essential.

We look forward to working with each of you on further efforts to lower health care costs and protect individuals affected by mental health and substance use disorders.

Sincerely,

2020 Mom

American Art Therapy Association
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American Association on Health and Disability
American Counseling Association
American Dance Therapy Association
American Group Psychotherapy Association
American Mental Health Counselors Association
American Nurses Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Psychological Association
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
Clinical Social Work Association
The College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists
Council on Social Work Education
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Eating Disorders Coalition
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Kennedy Forum
Legal Action Center
Mental Health America
NAADAC, the Association of Addiction Professionals
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association for Rural Mental Health
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability
Directors
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Eating Disorders Association
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
Psychotherapy Action Network
Residential Eating Disorders Consortium
Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America



SMART Recovery
Treatment Communities of America

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION ADVOCATES ADVANCING POLICY, LEADING CHANGE