September 28, 2021

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers, Subcommittee Chairwoman Eshoo, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Guthrie:

The Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), a coalition of national organizations representing consumers, families, mental health and addiction providers, advocates and other stakeholders committed to strengthening access to high-quality mental and behavioral health care, is writing to express our strong support for H.R. 4217, the Taskforce Recommending Improvements for Unaddressed Mental Perinatal & Postpartum Health (TRIUMPH) for New Moms Act. The bipartisan TRIUMPH for New Moms Act, led by Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA-44), Dr. Larry Bucshon, M.D. (R-IN-8), Rep. Young Kim (R-CA-39), and Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE-AL), will integrate and strategize federal resources to address the maternal mental health crisis. Currently, federal action on maternal mental health is disparate and uncoordinated across agencies and departments. TRIUMPH is a no-cost measure to reduce maternal mortality, prevent intergenerational harm, and mitigate impacts to the economy. We request that the bill be brought forward for consideration in the upcoming months.

Maternal mental health conditions, like postpartum depression, are serious illnesses that onset during pregnancy and the one year following childbirth. They are the most common pregnancy and postpartum complication, with 1 in 5 mothers suffering from a maternal mental health condition. Despite this impact, 50% of these moms never receive treatment – and when these illnesses go untreated, they cost the U.S. economy $14.2 billion each year (or $32,000 per mother-infant pair) in productivity loss, preterm births, and other health costs.

Maternal mental health conditions are strongly related to substance use and maternal mortality, and suicide and overdose are the leading contributors to maternal death. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened maternal mental health, with pregnant and new mothers experiencing anxiety and depression at a three to four times higher rate than pre-pandemic. Maternal mental health disorders have

1 Screening and Treatment for Maternal Depression and Related Behavioral Disorders Program (MDRBD) | Maternal and Child Health Bureau (hrsa.gov)
2 Maven_Maternal_Mental_Health_Fact_Sheet_2018.pdf (mavenclinic.com)
3 Societal Costs of Untreated Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders in the United States (mathematica.org)
4 Maternal drug-related death and suicide are leading causes of postpartum death in California - American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology (ajog.org)
5 A cross-national study of factors associated with women's perinatal mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic (plos.org)
intergenerational effects, and increase the likelihood of preterm birth, low birthweight delivery, and infant mortality; impair mother-infant bonding; and lead to behavioral, cognitive, and emotional impacts on the child\textsuperscript{6,7}.

The timely and bipartisan TRIUMPH for New Moms Act would coalesce a federal interdepartmental task force across HHS, DOL, DoD, VA, and HUD to address maternal mental health conditions by closing gaps, eliminating duplication, and coordinating federal resources on maternal, child, and maternal mental health. The task force would also integrate maternal mental health into existing maternity care programs and issue strategic guidance to governors for implementation.

As the U.S. maternal mortality rate rises and millions of new moms struggle with postpartum depression, substance use, and other maternal mental health conditions, the nation needs a strategy for this crisis. In breaking down silos and bringing federal actors together, TRIUMPH will build that strategy based on best practices, effective programs, and innovative care models. To protect new moms and future generations, we urge the Committee to bring forward bipartisan, common-sense measures like H.R.4217 the TRIUMPH for New Moms Act for consideration this Fall.

Sincerely,

2020 Mom
American Art Therapy Association
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American Counseling Association
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Mental Health Counselors Association
American Nurses Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychoanalytic Association
American Psychological Association
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Ambulatory Healthcare
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP)
Confederation of independent Psychoanalytic Societies
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health & Social Justice

\textsuperscript{6} Maternal anxiety, motherâ€“infant interactions, and infantsâ€™ response to challenge (psu.edu)
\textsuperscript{7} A Meta-analysis of Depression During Pregnancy and the Risk of Preterm Birth, Low Birth Weight, and Intrauterine Growth Restriction (nih.gov)
International OCD Foundation
International Society for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses
The Jewish Federations of North America
Kennedy Forum
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
The 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 Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National League for Nursing
Postpartum Support International
REDC Consortium
The Trevor Project
Trust for America's Health