October 12, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman, Senate HELP Committee
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member, Senate HELP Committee
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert Casey, Jr.
Senate HELP Committee
Chairman, Subcommittee on Children & Families
393 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Senate HELP Committee
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Children & Families
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Ranking Member Burr, Subcommittee Chairman Casey, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Cassidy:

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 S.2779 the Taskforce Recommending Improvements for Unaddressed Mental Perinatal & Postpartum Health (TRIUMPH) for New Moms Act. The bipartisan TRIUMPH for New Moms Act, introduced in September by Sen. Hassan (D-NH) and Sen. Tillis (R-NC), 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 intergenerational effects, and increase the likelihood of preterm birth, low birthweight delivery, and infant

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)
mortality; impair mother-infant bonding; and lead to behavioral, cognitive, and emotional impacts on the child\textsuperscript{6,7}.

The timely and bipartisan \textit{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, \textit{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 S.2779 the \textit{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  
International OCD Foundation

\textsuperscript{6} Maternal anxiety, mother-infant interactions, and infants’ 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 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