

January 12, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Collins, Ranking Member Murray, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

On behalf of the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), a coalition of national organizations representing individuals and families experiencing mental health and substance use challenges, mental health and substance use treatment providers, advocates, and other stakeholders committed to strengthening access to high-quality mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) care, we write to urge the passage of a robust full year Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) bill for Fiscal Year 2026. A robust full-year appropriations bill is preferable to a continuing resolution - as a full year bill reflects the hard work done by Congress on a bipartisan and bicameral basis over the past several months.

The country continues to face high levels of suicide and overdose deaths with more than 122 million Americans living in a federally designated Mental Health Provider Shortage Area. The programs and research conducted within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are critical components giving our nation hope to combat these crises and keep families whole.

Without support for mental health and substance use disorder resources, we believe progress that has been made over the past decade could be lost. Our nation's public health agencies and their programs are better equipped to help Americans with a full-year LHHS bill. A full year appropriations bill gives agencies predictable funding and necessary flexibility to carry out new programs and make necessary changes to existing ones to foster innovation. Further, a full year funding bill will ensure congressional intent is clear to agency officials. Given the gravity of the mental health and substance use crises, we urge continued forward momentum for bipartisan efforts in prevention, treatment and recovery for mental health and substance use disorders for all Americans. We urge bipartisan efforts to pass a full FY 26 LHHS bill into law to continue progress in turning the tide on our nation's mental health crisis.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. The MHLG stands ready to be a resource.

Sincerely,

Active Minds

Alliance for Rights and Recovery

American Academy of Nursing

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Nurses Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association Services

American Society of Addiction Medicine

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare (AABH)

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

Employee Assistance Professionals Association

Epilepsy Foundation of America

Fountain House

Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice

Inseparable

International OCD Foundation

International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses

Legal Action Center

Mental Health America

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association for Rural Mental Health (NARMH)

National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
(NACBHDD)

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of Social Workers

National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Agency Directors (NASADAD)

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

National Board for Certified Counselors & Affiliates

National Council for Mental Wellbeing

National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)

National Eating Disorders Association

National Federation of Families

National League for Nursing

National Register of Health Service Psychologists
Sandy Hook Promise
SMART Recovery
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
Tourette Association of America
Treatment Advocacy Center
Trust for America's Health
Vibrant Emotional Health
Western Youth Services
Youth Villages

CC:

Speaker Johnson
Leader Thune
Minority Leader Schumer
Minority Leader Jeffries
Chairwoman Capito
Ranking Member Baldwin
Chairman Aderholt