

May 1st, 2026

The Honorable John Kennedy
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory Booker
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lou Correa
2082 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Don Bacon
2104 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Kennedy, Senator Booker, Representative Correa, and Representative Bacon:

On behalf of the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), the largest 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 care, we write in strong support of the *Improving Mental Health Access for Students Act* (S.1924/H.R. 3624). This legislation would ensure that college students across the country are provided the contact information for the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, as well as the ability to add Crisis Text Line and a local or campus resource, on their student identification cards and via the campus website.

Data from well-resourced institutions illustrate that college-aged students are not trending in the right direction, despite the investments made to date. A recent study by Johns Hopkins University found that there was a 154% increase in suicidal ideation among college students over the last 15 years¹. A second comprehensive study conducted by the nonprofit Chegg.org shows that 43% of college students said that their school provided helpful mental health resources, while fewer than half (38%) said they felt their college or school instructors took mental health seriously.²

¹ Vidal, Carol. "Fifteen-year trends in depression symptoms by sex, race, and financial stress among U.S. College Students." *Journal of Affective Disorders*, vol. 398, no. 121002, 2026, p. all. *Fifteen-year trends in depression symptoms by sex, race, and financial stress among U.S. College Students*,

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0165032725024449?via%3Dihub>.

² Batiste, Devonya. "Chegg, Inc. - Nearly a Quarter of US College and High School Students Know Someone Who Has Had Suicidal Thoughts during Covid-19 Pandemic, According to New Chegg Survey." Chegg.Org, 10 Sept. 2020, investor.chegg.com/Press-Releases/press-release-details/2020/Nearly-a-Quarter-of-US-College-and-High-School-Students-Know-Someone-Who-Has-Had-Suicidal-Thoughts-During-Covid-19-Pandemic-According-to-New-Chegg-Survey/default.aspx.

While Congress has made strides towards adequate redress of the youth mental health crisis, more must be done. The *Improving Mental Health Access for Students Act* is a commonsense measure that will help college students when they need it most, by providing immediate and confidential mental health and crisis support by placing vital resources on all college student IDs. It is a no-cost step in the right direction to raise awareness of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline amongst this vulnerable population.

MHLG is proud to endorse the *Improving Mental Health Access for Students Act* and applauds your bipartisan leadership in supporting the mental health of our nation's college-aged students. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to advance and pass this legislation.

Sincerely,

Active Minds
American Academy of Pediatrics
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 Psychiatric Association
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Crisis Text Line
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Inseparable
International OCD Foundation
International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses
Jed Foundation
Legal Action Center
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD)
National Council for Mental Wellbeing
National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA)

National Register of Health Service Psychologists
Psychotherapy Action Network (PsiAN)
Sandy Hook Promise
The Carter Center
The Kennedy Forum
The Trevor Project
Trust for America's Health
Vibrant Emotional Health
Youth Power Project
Youth Villages