

September 7, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
U.S. Senate Health, Education,
Labor, & Pensions Committee
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Health, Education,
Labor, & Pensions Committee
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Ranking Member Burr,

We, the 153 leading national, state, and local experts on mental health and substance use disorders, first want to thank you for your leadership on the emergency funding for youth and families' mental health passed in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. While these emergency resources will significantly help to start addressing the nation's mental health crisis, critical mental health program authorizations from the 21st Century CURES Act will soon expire and must be reauthorized by the end of the year. The House already passed a reauthorization package in June through H.R. 7666, Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act, which is a strong base for the Committee to build off of. We know that America still faces an enduring mental health crisis, particularly for youth. Therefore, as the Senate returns from August Recess, we strongly urge you to bring forward and pass these necessary mental health provisions from H.R. 7666 before December.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a severe toll on the mental health of Americans, with youth experiencing the steepest declines in mental health. Among adolescents aged 13-18, overdoses have jumped 119%, intentional self-harm and eating disorders hospitalizations have doubled, and children's hospitals have reported a 45% increase in cases of self-injury and suicide.^{1,2,3,4} Aggravated by the infant formula crisis, maternal mental health conditions have also surged, with pregnant and postpartum moms experiencing anxiety and depression at 3-4 times higher rates than pre-pandemic.⁵

The comprehensive package passed by the House includes and bolsters many federal programs that address the mental health and substance use crisis, including:

- Reauthorizations for youth suicide prevention programs and initiatives;
- Reauthorizations and improvements to the substance use and mental health block grants
- Workforce trainings and pipeline development;
- Mental health parity law enforcement and compliance provisions, including protection for frontline workers;
- Guidance and funding for quality assurance and assessment of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline;

¹ FAIR Health. (March 2, 2021). [The Impact of COVID-19 on Pediatric Mental Health: A Study of Private Healthcare Claims.](#)

² Radhakrishnan, Lakshmi, Leeb, Rebecca, Bitsko, Rebecca . . . & Anderson, Kayla. (February, 18, 2022). Pediatric Emergency Department Visits Associated with Mental Health Conditions Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic—United States, January 2019-January 2022. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 71. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/71/wr/pdfs/mm7108e2-H.pdf>

³ Alana K. Otto, Jessica M. Jary, Julie Sturza, Catherine A. Miller, Natalie Prohaska, Terrill Bravender, Jessica Van Huysse; Medical Admissions Among Adolescents With Eating Disorders During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Pediatrics* October 2021; 148 (4): e2021052201. 10.1542/peds.2021-052201

⁴ Children's Hospital Association, September 2021, https://www.childrenshospitals.org/-/media/Files/CHA/Main/Issues_and_Advocacy/Key_Issues/Mental-Health/2021/covid_and_childrens_mental_health_factsheet_091721.pdf?la=en&hash=F201013848F9B9C97FAE16A89B01A38547C7C5C7

⁵ [A cross-national study of factors associated with women's perinatal mental health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic | PLOS ONE](#)

- Pediatric and maternal mental health access programs; and
- Other programs of regional and national significance.

Without Senate action, most of these programs will expire in December – therefore, it is imperative that the HELP Committee act swiftly to bring forward a CURES package and move it through the Chamber. As mental health and substance use disorder providers and advocates, we have seen the sharp rise in diagnoses, hospitalizations, overdoses, and suicides firsthand. We thank you again for your enduring work to secure mental health funding infusions in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act and urge you to continue your leadership by reauthorizing and expanding these critical CURES provisions this fall.

Sincerely,

2020 Mom	American Occupational Therapy Association
Academy for Eating Disorders	American Psychiatric Association
Active Minds	American Psychological Association
ACTNow for Mental Health	American School Health Association
Alabama - Trinity Health	Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders (ANAD)
Alaska Postpartum Support International Chapter	Anxiety and Depression Association of America
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy	Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work	California - Eating Disorder Therapy Los Angeles
American Association of Birth Centers	California - Eating Disorders Resource Center
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	California - Maternal Mental Health NOW
American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP)	California - Monte Nido and Affiliates
American College Health Association (ACHA)	California - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders
American College of Nurse-Midwives	California - Trinity Health
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists	Clinical Social Work Association
American Counseling Association	Colorado Postpartum Support International Chapter
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention	Connecticut - Trinity Health
American Mental Health Counselors Association	Delaware - Trinity Health
	Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action

Florida - Centerstone

Florida - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Florida - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders

Florida - Trinity Health

Georgia - Accanto Health

Georgia - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Georgia - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders

Georgia - Trinity Health

Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice

HealthyWomen

Idaho - Trinity Health

Illinois - Centerstone

Illinois - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Illinois - SunCloud Health

Illinois - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders

Illinois - Trinity Health

Indiana - Centerstone

Indiana - Trinity Health

Inseparable

International OCD Foundation

International Society for Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses

Iowa - Eating Disorder Coalition of Iowa

Iowa - Trinity Health

Jewish Healthcare Foundation

Kentucky - Centerstone

Louisiana - River Oaks Hospital Eating Disorder Treatment Center

March for Moms

Maryland - Bethesda Women's Mental Health

Maryland - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Maryland - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders

Maryland - Trinity Health

Massachusetts - Doc Wayne Youth Services

Massachusetts - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Massachusetts - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders

Massachusetts - Trinity Health

Massachusetts Postpartum Depression Fund

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance

Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Mental Health America

Michigan - Trinity Health

Michigan Eating Disorders Alliance

Minnesota - Accanto Health

Minnesota - Trinity Health

Minnesota - Women's Wellbeing Program, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences

Missouri - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Missouri Eating Disorders Council

Mom Congress

Montana - Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, The Montana Coalition, Inc. (HMHB-MT)

Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association Inc (MEDA)	New York - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders
National Alliance for Eating Disorders	New York - Trinity Health
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health	North Carolina - Accanto Health
National Association for Rural Mental Health	North Carolina - Carolina Resource Center for Eating Disorders
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors	North Carolina - East Carolina University
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health	North Carolina - Lutz, Alexander & Assoc. Nutrition Therapy
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners	North Carolina - Nutritious Thoughts, LLC
National Association of Psycho-Social Obstetricians and Gynecologists	North Carolina - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders
National Association of School Psychologists	North Carolina - Trinity Health
National Association of Social Workers	North Carolina Postpartum Support International Chapter
National Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders	Ohio - Accanto Health
National Council for Mental Wellbeing	Ohio - Mental Health America of Ohio
National Eating Disorders Association	Ohio - Trinity Health
National League for Nursing	Oregon - Amanda Birkhead Nutrition Counseling LLC
National Partnership for Women & Families	Oregon - Monte Nido and Affiliates
Nebraska - Trinity Health	Oregon - Trinity Health
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies	Pennsylvania - Accanto Health
New Jersey - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders	Pennsylvania - Monte Nido and Affiliates
New Jersey - Trinity Health	Pennsylvania - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders
New York - Monte Nido and Affiliates	Pennsylvania - Trinity Health
New York - Mount Sinai Center of Excellence in Eating and Weight Disorders	Pennsylvania - University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
New York - Postpartum Resource Center of New York	Postpartum Support International
	Project HEAL
	Psychotherapy Action Network

REDC Consortium

Return to Zero: HOPE

RI International

Sandy Hook Promise

Shades Of Blue Project

South Dakota - Trinity Health

Tennessee - Centerstone

Tennessee - The Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders

Texas - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Texas - Trinity Health

The Colette Louise Tisdahl Foundation

The College for Behavioral Health Leadership

The Jed Foundation

The Jewish Federations of North America

The Kennedy Forum

Trust for America's Health

Virginia - Accanto Health

Virginia - Monte Nido and Affiliates

Washington - Accanto Health

Washington - Opal: Food and Body Wisdom

Washington - Perinatal Support Washington

WithAll

ZERO TO THREE