

July 13, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are writing to urge you to bring S. 2680, the *Mental Health Reform Act of 2016*, to the Senate floor for a vote as quickly as possible. Last week, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to pass H.R. 2646, the *Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act*. It is now the Senate's turn to act.

Mental illness is widely prevalent in the United States. Over 68 million Americans have experienced mental illness in the past year which is more than 20 percent of the total population of the United States. Lifetime rates are much higher with some estimates approaching 50 percent. More striking, in 2013, over 41,000 Americans died by suicide. Many individuals with mental illness or substance use conditions are unable to access or receive the appropriate services and supports for these illnesses, and they remain constantly challenged by mental health service delivery systems that are largely fragmented and uncoordinated across the country.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee voted unanimously to advance S. 2680 in April. Notably, this bipartisan bill strengthens federal coordination of mental health resources, increases reporting on mental health parity, advances integrated service delivery, supports the mental health workforce, and increases early access to mental health services.

We now need your leadership to pass mental health reform and bring millions of Americans and their families help and hope.

Thank you for your consideration. We stand ready to work with you to ensure this critical first step in mental health reform can be sent to the President's desk for signature this year.

Sincerely,

American Psychiatric Association
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association on Health and Disability
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Nurses Association
American Orthopsychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

Clinical Social Work Guild 49
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Eating Disorders Coalition
The Jewish Federations of North America
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
The National Association for Rural Mental Health
The National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National League for Nursing
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
NHMH – No Health without Mental Health
Sandy Hook Promise
The Trevor Project