

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 13, 2020

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

We strongly encourage you, as you work in preparing the FY21 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, to fund the following programs that reduce stigma and increase access and availability of mental health services:

1. Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHBG) [SAMHSA]

Current Funding Level (FY20): \$722,571,000; Request (FY21): \$757,571,000

Purpose of Program: The MHBG awards funding to states to supplement existing and/or new mental health services. Services supported include outpatient treatment for serious mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorders; supported employment and supported housing; rehabilitation services; crisis stabilization and case management; peer specialist and consumer-directed services; wraparound services for children and families; jail diversion programs; and services for at-risk populations (e.g. individuals who are homeless, those in rural and frontier areas, military families, and veterans).

Impact of Increased Funding: The additional \$35 million would be set aside for utilization by states to upgrade crisis care services. Crisis care services include the following: crisis call centers, mobile crisis services, and crisis stabilization programs.

2. Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics Expansion Grants [SAMHSA]

Current Funding Level (FY20): \$200,000,000; Request (FY21): \$250,000,000

Purpose of Program: The Excellence in Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Act created an eight state Medicaid demonstration designed to provide intensive community-based mental health and addiction treatment services to low income persons with severe mental illnesses and Opioid Use Disorder through Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs).



Impact of Increased Funding: Congress in FY20, appropriated \$200 million to CCBHCs and opened these grants up to all fifty states. Increased funding will provide organizations across the country an opportunity to dramatically expand access to comprehensive and evidence-based mental health and addiction care by attesting to and offering the required array of services.

3. National Institute of Health (NIH)

Current Funding Level (FY20): \$41,684,000,000; Request (FY21): \$44,700,000,000

Purpose of Program: Continued investments in research will aid in developing rapid, effective treatments for behavioral health disorders and facilitate early identification and intervention. Seeing that mental health and substance use conditions frequently co-occur, the National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse must have sufficient funding to realize this ambitious vision of finding cures to these disabling illnesses.

Impact of Increased Funding: The requested increase is equal to the cost of biomedical research inflation.

4. Loan Repayment Program for Substance Use Disorder Treatment Workforce (HRSA)

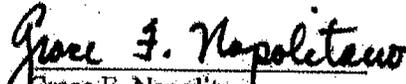
Current Funding Level (FY20): No less than \$12,000,000; Request (FY21): \$25,000,000

Purpose of Program: The Loan Repayment Program for the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Workforce was authorized by Congress in 2017 to respond to the growing opioid epidemic. The program expands the substance abuse treatment workforce by providing loan repayment for eligible mental and behavioral health professionals working full-time in high-need communities or federally-designated mental health professional shortage areas.

Impact of Funding: According to SAMHSA, an estimated 20.7 million Americans aged 12 or over needed treatment for SUD in 2017, but only about 4 million Americans aged 12 or over received any form of treatment. Funding for this loan repayment program would help reduce this significant treatment gap by expanding the supply of qualified mental and behavioral health providers.

We would truly appreciate your continued commitment to mental health by funding these key programs in the FY21 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

Sincerely,


Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Mental Health Caucus


John Katko
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Mental Health Caucus

Member of Congress

FY21 Napolitano Katko Mental Health Appropriations Letter also submitted by:

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