



April 15, 2021

Honorable Ron Wyden
Chairman
Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Wyden and Ranking Member Crapo:

On behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), I am writing in support of confirmation of Chiquita Brooks-LaSure as the next Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). NAMI values Ms. Brooks-LaSure's unparalleled health policy expertise, and her commitment to helping Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, many of whom have mental health conditions.

As the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness, NAMI fights for policy change that translates our mission into reality, including promoting early intervention, improving access to quality mental health care and diverting from criminal justice involvement. COVID-19 is an unprecedented crisis that affects not only our physical health and daily lives, but also our mental health. We need a CMS administrator who will work to ensure that people in need of mental health and substance use disorder care are able to access services when and where they need it. We believe Ms. Brooks-LaSure is the type of leader needed to advance CMS' mission.

An established expert on Medicare, Medicaid and the private health insurance market, Ms. Brooks-LaSure consistently worked to improve health care coverage and affordability for all Americans. She played a central role in the drafting of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) while working for the U.S. House of Representatives' Ways and Means Committee, and then led implementation of the law from her role as Deputy Director for Policy at the CMS Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight. She has earned a reputation of a pragmatic leader who will work to expand access to health care, while advancing health equity.

We believe Ms. Brooks-LaSure is well situated to step back into a leadership role at HHS and we proudly support her confirmation as CMS Administrator. We look forward to working with her to expand access to important and necessary mental health services as the nation recovers from this unprecedented pandemic. We urge the Committee move expeditiously on her nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Daniel H. Gillison, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Daniel H. Gillison, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer