February 20, 2020

The Honorable Grace Napolitano  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Katko  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Napolitano and Katko:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations of the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), I am pleased to express our strong support for the Mental Health Services for Students Act of 2019, H.R. 1109.

The Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG) is a coalition of national organizations representing consumers, family members, mental health and addiction providers, advocates, payers and other stakeholders committed to strengthening Americans’ access to mental health and addiction care. As trusted leaders in the field, our 70+ member organizations are dedicated to elevating the national conversation around mental health and addiction.

Your legislation, H.R. 1109, will provide federal support to assist local communities and schools with health providers who can effectively support our nation’s youth in dealing with trauma and violence by increasing funding through Project AWARE and strengthening school-based resources for students. We value initiatives like yours, that incentivize local partnerships and positive behavioral interventions to create a new culture that places the value of mental health at the forefront of student success. MHLG appreciates your efforts on these issues and employing a community wide approach to give students the best possible outcomes to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

As you know, there is strong research that links the mental, social and emotional health of students to their academic achievement. MHLG recognizes the critical role of safe, encouraging school environments to maximize student academic outcomes and that non-academic concerns, such as bullying, violence, and threats of violence can harm a student’s ability to focus on school work. All students, regardless of socioeconomic status, deserve access to well-trained mental health professionals within schools and we commend your strong leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

2020Moms  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Art Therapy Association  
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry