

April 17, 2019

The Honorable Tina Smith
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Smith:

The Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), is pleased to express our strong support for the Mental Health Services for Students Act of 2019, S. 1122.

The 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, S. 1122, 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 Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Art Therapy Association
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Counseling Association
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention/SPAN USA
American Group Psychotherapy Association
American Mental Health Counselors Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychoanalytic Association
American Psychological Association
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
Association for Behavioral & Cognitive Therapies
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Campaign for Trauma Informed Policy and Practice
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
Cities Thrive Mental Health Coalition
Clinical Social Work Association
Confederation of Independent Psychoanalytic Societies
Council on Social Work Education
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Kennedy Forum
Mental Health America
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health
National Association for Rural Mental Health
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Board for Certified Counselors
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Disability Rights Network
National Eating Disorders Association
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
National League for Nursing
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
Psychotherapy Action Network
Sandy Hook Promise
School Based Health Alliance
School Social Work Association of America
The Trevor Project
Treatment Communities of America
Trust for America's Health