



April 6, 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 Andrea Palm as the next Deputy Secretary for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). NAMI values Ms. Palm's commitment to public service, significant policy expertise and her dedication to improving the health and well-being of the American people, including people with mental illness.

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 leadership at HHS that will work to address the significant mental health effects of the pandemic, including for children and youth, by significantly increasing support for mental health and substance use services. We believe Ms. Palm is the type of leader needed at HHS.

With over 20 years of experience managing large teams, billion-dollar budgets, and driving public health initiatives, Ms. Palm is well situated to step back into a leadership role at HHS. As the Secretary-designee of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), she oversaw a budget of \$12 billion and was responsible for managing the state's COVID-19 response, Medicaid program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and behavioral health programs. In her previous service at HHS, she was a practical problem solver who led HHS efforts to combat the opioid crisis.

We believe Ms. Palm understands the importance of integrating mental health care into the overall health care system and will work to expand access to important and necessary mental health services as the nation recovers from this unprecedented pandemic. NAMI proudly support Ms. Palm's confirmation as HHS Deputy Secretary. We urge the Committee move expeditiously on her nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel H. Gillison, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "D".

Daniel H. Gillison, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer