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Multi-stakeholder Coalition Applauds Introduction of Bipartisan Legislation to Support Socially Isolated and Lonely Older Americans

Washington, DC – Today, Representatives David Trone (D-MD) and Tim Walberg (R-MI) introduced the *Protecting Older Americans from Social Isolation Act of 2019* in the U.S. House, bipartisan legislation that promotes social connectedness and reduces negative health effects in older Americans suffering from social isolation and loneliness. The Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness enthusiastically supports the legislation to address the epidemic of social isolation and loneliness in the United States.

“We applaud Representatives Trone and Walberg for their leadership in supporting older Americans who are social isolated or lonely, or both,” said Andrew MacPherson, Director of the Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness. **“With millions of older adults suffering from chronic loneliness in the United States, the time is now to provide support for the aging network to identify and assist individuals who are suffering. We look forward to working with Representatives Trone and Walberg to swiftly pass this critical legislation.”**

According to recent studies, more than [8 million](#) Americans experience social isolation, and nearly half of older adults feel isolated, alone or left out. Research conducted by Dr. Julianne Holt-Lundstad shows that social isolation and loneliness are associated with a 29 percent and 26 percent increased risk of mortality, respectively, comparable to that of obesity and cigarette smoking. In addition to negative health effects, it is estimated that Medicare spends [\\$6.7 billion](#) annually as a result of individuals being socially isolated.

The legislation introduced by Representatives Trone and Walberg addresses these problems by building upon existing resources and infrastructure to reduce the rate of social isolation and loneliness in older adults and supporting screening services to prevent the prevalence of the epidemic.

The Coalition urges swift passage of this important legislation to ensure socially isolated and lonely older Americans receive support and services necessary to feel connected in society.

The Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness brings together a diverse set of national organizations including consumer groups, health plans, health care providers, technology innovators, patient advocates and more to develop and advocate for federal policy solutions to address the epidemic of social isolation and loneliness. For more information, please visit: www.endsocialisolation.org.

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