



The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Health  
Energy and Commerce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington DC. 20510

The Honorable Larry Bucshon M.D.  
Vice-Chair  
Subcommittee on Health  
Energy and Commerce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington DC. 20510

April 4, 2024

Dear Chairwoman McMorris Rodgers, Subcommittee Chair Guthrie, and Vice-Chair Bucshon,

My organization, and the 54 organizations listed below, write today requesting that the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Health, hold a legislative hearing on HR 3073, the bi-partisan *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act*.

Our organizations work in the mental health and human services fields. We believe that HR 3073 will be a major step forward in helping to prevent and heal mental health problems among the people we work with, and nationwide, by supporting and funding community-based initiatives that strengthen their residents capacity for mental wellness and resilience for all types of adversities.

From first-hand experience we know that mental health problems are at very serious levels today. Last year, for example, the State of Mental Health in America survey by Mental Health America found that 21 percent of adults, or nearly 50 million Americans, are experiencing at least one diagnosed mental illness. Over 12.1 million adults have reported serious thoughts of suicide. Fifty five percent of adults with a diagnosed mental illness did not received any treatment. Many other American's are experiencing undiagnosed psychological and emotional issues. A poll by the American Psychiatric Association, for instance, found that 53 percent of adults with children under 18 said they are concerned about the mental state of their children.

Added to these struggles are numerous accelerating stresses and extreme weather events Americans are experiencing nationwide. In the past 10 years, according to FEMA, 88.5 percent of all counties nationwide declared a natural disaster, including 95 percent of the 200 most populated counties. NOAA found that in 2023 the U.S. experienced 28 separate major weather disasters that each resulted in at least \$8 billion in damages. These disasters can traumatize 20-40 percent of those who are directly impacted, 10-20 percent of disaster response workers, and 5-10 percent of the general public

who are not directly affected but know someone who is or view the events from afar. Consequently, the number of people who experience a mental health problem as a result of a disaster often outweighs those with physical injuries by 40 to 1.

These problems are not limited to urban areas. According to the Rural Health Information Hub, almost 23 percent of adults in nonmetropolitan areas reported having a mental illness. This includes much higher rates of depression and 64-68 percent higher rates of suicide compared to urban areas. One reason is that a majority of rural areas lack a sufficient numbers of mental health providers. In addition, many rural residents fear being stigmatized by others if they utilize mental health services.

Mental health services will remain extremely important. However, the number of certified providers will always be limited. We therefore believe it is important to expand how these issues are addressed by actively engaging local communities in developing strategies that strengthen individual, family, and community capacity for mental wellness and resilience to prevent and heal social, psychological, emotional, and behavioral struggles. These local initiatives are what the *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act* would support.

For these reasons we ask the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Health Subcommittee, to hold a legislative hearing on HR 3073, the bi-partisan *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act*.

Sincerely,

Bob Doppelt  
Coordinator,  
International Transformational Resilience Coalition

National Association of State Mental Health  
Program Directors

American Psychiatric Association

The Association for Addiction Professionals

North Carolina Partnership for Children

Rural Opportunity Institute

Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Trauma-Informed Hampshire County

Restore Hope

Child and Adolescent Health Measurement  
Initiative

Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice  
(CTIPP)

Trauma Informed Oregon

National Prevention Science Coalition to  
Improve Lives

American Public Health Association

National Federation of Families

Alliance for Positive Health

Prevention Institute

American Counseling Association

Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness

Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health

American Association of Child and Adolescent  
Psychiatry

Sabater Laboratory for Psychological  
Innovations

New Hanover County Resiliency Task Force

Mental Health America  
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social  
Justice  
Lakeshore Foundation  
The Resilient Activist  
National League for Nursing  
Organic Intelligence®  
The Family Focused Treatment Association  
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies  
Peak Into Resilience  
SabaterLAB Foundation  
Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine  
Community Resilience Initiative  
Visible Hands Collaborative  
Resources for Resilience  
The Black Block Community Foundation  
Committee for Children

Trauma Resource Institute  
Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility  
American Association on Health and Disability  
Trauma & Resilience Initiative Inc.  
Mental Health America of the Palm Beaches  
Inseparable  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse  
Practitioners  
The Kennedy Forum  
Climate Mental Health Network  
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
Unitarian Universalist Mental Health Network  
Trauma Healing Project  
Able Differently  
Columbia Resilience  
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved  
Children's Environmental Health Network