September 28, 2026

The Honorable Doris Matsui
22206 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
271 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Matsui and Representative Fitpzatrick,

On behalf of the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG), the largest coalition of national organizations representing individuals and families experiencing mental health and substance use challenges, mental health and substance use treatment providers, advocates, and other stakeholders committed to strengthening access to high-quality care, we write in strong support of the *988 Implementation Act*.

MHLG and its members have been at the forefront of the movement to transform and improve how our nation responds to people in suicide and mental health crisis. This started with the transition of the 10-digit national suicide prevention hotline to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, and we are deeply grateful to Congress for its bipartisan investments and collaboration in support of the Lifeline since before its launch in 2022. In the four years since 988 went live, the 988 Lifeline has received over 30.5 million calls, chats, and texts from individuals across the country. A recent study shows that 988 is working: since the 2022 rollout, youth suicide rates fell on average 11% below projections, with the sharpest declines in states where more 988 calls are answered. However, 71% of call centers across the country report understaffing, and 89% have difficulty securing the resources needed to hire and retain staff.[1]

Ensuring that the 988 Lifeline has the necessary resources to adequately meet the needs of anyone reaching out for help is critical to ensuring its long-term success and the wellbeing of our country. The *988 Implementation Act* capitalizes on the Lifeline's success by providing vital funding for call centers to hire staff, enhance technology, training, and operational capabilities, and authorize funds for communities to improve or develop mobile crisis response teams. It would also establish a national suicide prevention media campaign to raise awareness, expand workforce training programs for behavioral health providers, and expand health insurance coverage for crisis response and stabilization.

Thank you for your leadership in introducing the *988 Implementation Act*. MHLG is pleased to be a resource to you and your team as you continue to work on this important legislation, and we look forward to its swift passage.

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[1] https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2848613?guestAccessKey=e6c7d6ce-71fa-4e40-96ef-1e7dce27d86d&utm_term=050526&utm_campaign=ftm_links&utm_medium=referral&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_HvZWKgc_texHAtJFUFF1uMlvwELicTPUY7yq84IiceGL4Mx8h_X5SjL_AJGKtYRIC-YD1LVd-NKBBylBwVvbDdnvKGw&_hsmi=417385176&utm_content=tfl&utm_source=for_the_media

Sincerely,

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work
American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Group Psychotherapy Association
American Mental Health Counselors Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
American Psychological Association Services
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
Crisis Text Line
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)
Easterseals, Inc.
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Global Health Advocacy Incubator, Overdose Prevention Initiative
Huntington's Disease Society of America
IC&RC
Inseparable
International OCD Foundation
Legal Action Center
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Council for Mental Wellbeing
National League for Nursing
National Register of Health Service Psychologists
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Psychotherapy Action Network (PsiAN)
Sandy Hook Promise
SMART Recovery
The American Counseling Association
The Kennedy Forum
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
The Trevor Project
Tourette Association of America
Treatment Advocacy Center (TAC)
Trust for America's Health