

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 10, 2013

Mr. Jeffrey Zients
Deputy Director for Management
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Deputy Director Zients:

We write to urge you to maintain funding for mental health programs as you plan for the President's budget for Fiscal Year 2014.

There have been five large-scale shootings since 2007. On December 14, 2012, twenty-six people – six adults and twenty children age six to seven - were shot and killed at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. On August 5, 2012, six people lost their lives during a shooting at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. On July 20, 2012, twelve people were killed and fifty-eight injured in a shooting inside of a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado. On January 8, 2011, six people died and thirteen were wounded during a shooting at a public meeting held in a supermarket parking lot near Tucson, Arizona. On April 16, 2007, thirty-two people were shot and killed while seventeen were wounded on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. It is our understanding that in many instances the individuals who carried out these horrific and unforgivable acts were reported to have been suffering from some type of mental illness and/or substance abuse disorders.

Those tragedies illustrate one clear fact: America is facing a mental health crisis that we can no longer ignore. In these difficult economic times, the demand for addiction and mental health care is anticipated to grow. Almost sixty percent of states have reported increased needs for community-based mental health services. According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), there is a severe shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists, with more than 20,000 psychiatrists needed. Current statistics reveal that one out of five Americans will have some type of mental illness at least once in their lifetime. Businesses lose on average 1.3 billion days of work each year, costing them \$44 billion annually, and affecting our economy at approximately \$150 billion a year. Suicide is among the top ten leading causes of death in the United States, with eighteen veterans taking their own lives every day, and the third leading cause of death in youths age 10-24. In a 2009 report, the Institute of Medicine declared that the prevention of mental health and substance abuse conditions among young people must be a national priority.

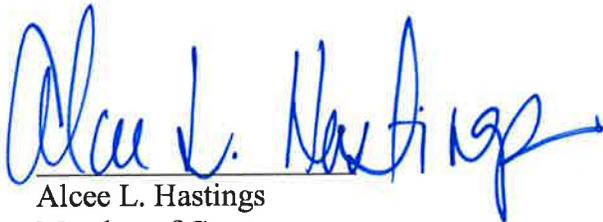
Now is not the time to cut programs that help Americans with mental illnesses or substance abuse disorders. Doing so would only add to the already increasing problems that face our mental health system today. Cuts to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Administration (SAMHSA) have already been enacted in Fiscal Year 2011 and Fiscal Year 2012, and states have cut funding for mental health care by nearly \$3.4 billion over the last three years.

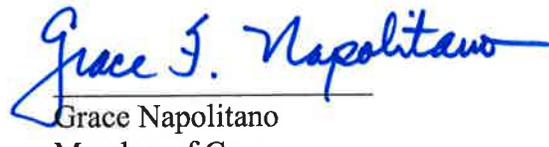
Mental illness does not discriminate and can affect any man, woman, or child at some point in their life, regardless of their race, age, or financial status. This is why, now more than ever, we must continue to invest in mental health programs that reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, recognize mental illness equally to other health conditions and illnesses, promote prevention and detection initiatives, and provide access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services. Further cuts to these essential programs will pose a dangerous and serious threat to public health and safety. We can both help Americans in need and reduce the cost of mental health on society by investing in such programs.

Again, we urge your immediate attention to this critically important matter, and thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress



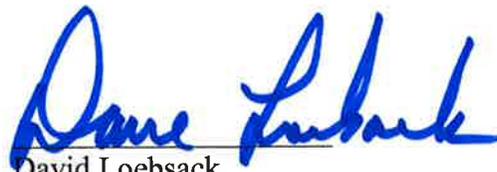
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



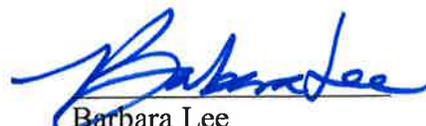
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



David Loebsack
Member of Congress



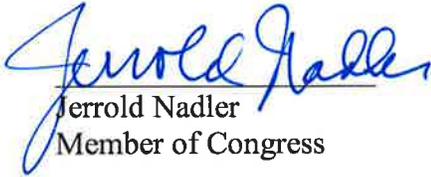
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



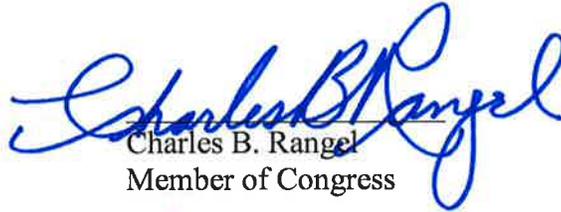
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



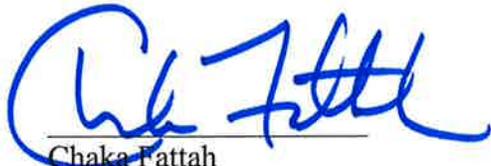
Ron Barber
Member of Congress



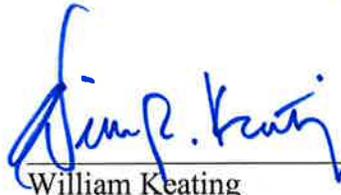
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress



Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress



William Keating
Member of Congress



Rush Holt
Member of Congress



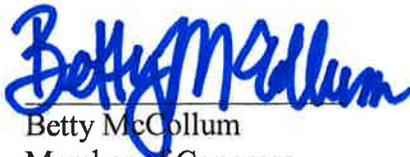
Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress



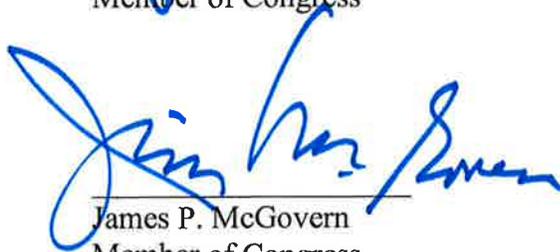
Mike Honda
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

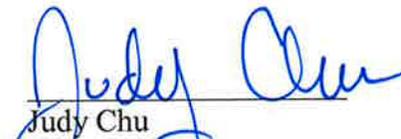


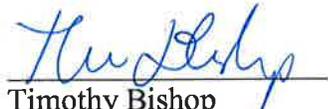
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

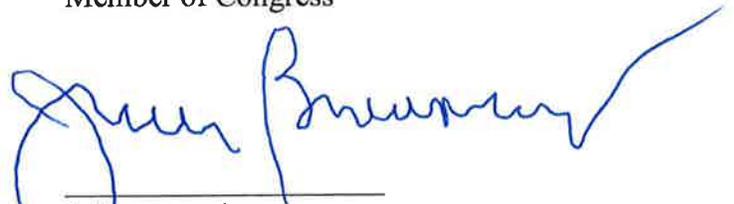

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

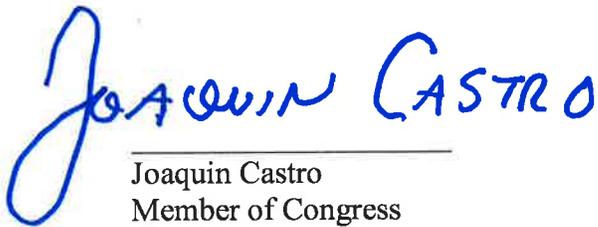

Judy Chu
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Timothy Bishop
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Madeleine Bordallo
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Donna M. Christensen
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Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

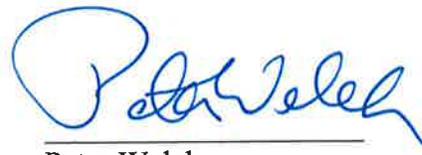

Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress


Rick Nolan
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Lois Frankel
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Filemon Vela
Member of Congress


John Lewis
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Peter Welch
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Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress


Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress



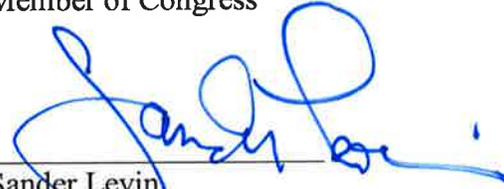
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Nick J. Rahall, II
Member of Congress



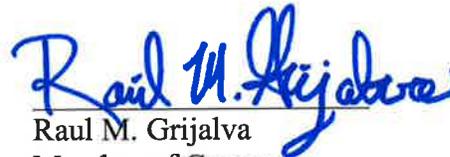
James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



Sander Levin
Member of Congress



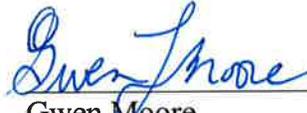
Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Melvin L. Watt
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Diana DeGette". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.

Diana DeGette

Member of Congress

Cc:

The Honorable John Boehner, Speaker, US House of Representatives

The Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader, US Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, US House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader, US Senate