

March 10, 2016

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Health Education Labor &
Pensions (HELP) Committee
725 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Health Education Labor &
Pension (HELP) Committee
525 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Support for The Mental Health Reform Act of 2016

Dear Senator Alexander and Senator Murray:

I am writing to you on behalf of 130,000 social workers who are members of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the largest professional association of social workers in the country. NASW supports the Mental Health Reform Act. It is our hope that this important bipartisan measure will be joined with key Senate Finance Committee Medicaid and Medicare behavioral health reforms during Senate floor consideration.

Social workers are often at the front lines of providing mental health services to individuals, families, and groups in mental health crises. Clinical social workers represent the largest group of mental and behavioral health practitioners in the nation. Working in a variety of diverse settings, they diagnose and treat mental illness and various other emotional and behavioral disturbances.

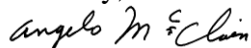
Thank you for including clinical social workers in the list of professions that the Health Resources and Services Administration will encourage individuals to pursue careers.

We also appreciate your inclusion of licensed clinical social workers in the list of potential participants of the Inter-departmental Serious Mental Illness Coordinating Committee.

Under the telehealth child psychiatry access grants, we are pleased to see the inclusion of licensed clinical social workers in the pediatric mental health team.

Again, we appreciate the hard bipartisan work that went into producing the Mental Health Reform Act. We look forward to working with the HELP Committee closely as the legislative process unfolds.

Sincerely,



Angelo McClain, PhD, LICSW
Chief Executive Officer