June 23, 2026

The Honorable Erin Houchin
342 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Valadao
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lori Trahan
2233 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Pocan
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Houchin, Trahan, Valadao, Pocan,

On behalf of the undersigned national and state organizations dedicated to improving the mental health and well-being of the nation's children and youth, we are proud to support the bipartisan, bicameral *Campus Lifeline Act of 2026* (H.R. 8657), which seeks to expand awareness and access to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline by facilitating the inclusion of 988 on all student identification cards and elevate youth-led solutions through the Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Campus Suicide Prevention Grant Program.

In 2023, 40% of high school students reported feeling hopelessness and sadness.[1] Over the last decade, the U.S. has seen a 12.5% increase in students attempting suicide with a national rate of 9% and nearly 20% of students seriously considering attempting suicide.[2] Between 2018 and 2022, over 30,000 teens and young adults died by suicide, establishing suicide as the second leading cause of death for Americans aged 15 to 24.[3] In 2022, Congress took action to address this epidemic by enacting *The National Suicide Hotline Designation Act* (P.L. 116-172), which established 988 as the nationwide, 3-digit code for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Since the implementation of 988, the rate of suicides among young people in the U.S. has dropped 11%, with higher decreases seen in states with a higher volume of answered 988 calls.[4]

However, research shows that as recently as 2024, only 5% of young adults were aware of 988 and its life-saving support, compared to 15% of all adults.[5] Thirty-nine states have introduced laws to boost youth awareness by requiring 988 be listed on new student identification cards, with 25 states

[1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2024). *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013–2023.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/index.html
[2] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2024). *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013–2023.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/index.html
[3] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *WISQARS Fatal and Nonfatal Injury Reports.* National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Retrieved from: https://wisqars.cdc.gov/reports/?o=MORT&y1=2018&y2=2022&t=0&d=&i=2&m=20810&g=00&me=0&s=0&r=0&ry=2&e=0&yp=65&a=5Yr&g1=15&g2=20&a1=0&a2=199&r1=INTENT&r2=NONE&r3=NONE&r4=NONE
[4] Patel VR, Liu M, Jena AB. Suicide Mortality Among Adolescents and Young Adults After Launch of a Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. *JAMA.* 2026;335(19):1721–1723. doi:10.1001/jama.2026.5157
[5] Annenberg Public Policy Center (2024). *Fewer Than 1 in 5 Know the 988 Suicide Lifeline.* Retrieved from: https://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/fewer-than-1-in-5-know-the-988-suicide-lifeline/

passing this requirement into law.[6] The *Campus Lifeline Act* seeks to address this patchwork implementation and include 988 on all student identification cards in K-12 and higher education settings.

Additionally, access to crisis services must be complemented by youth prevention and early intervention services. Tragically, among young adults with recurrent suicidal ideation or attempts, nearly 50% will not seek help.[7] Rural and male students are even less likely to seek mental health help compared to peers.[8,9] This delay not only increases risk of suicide but escalates mental health acuity and the cost of treatment.[10] Student led mental health groups have succeeded in combatting treatment ambivalence, with demonstrated improvements to student treatment-seeking and informal peer mental health referral behaviors.[11] To further strengthen this success, the *Campus Lifeline Act* would require GLS Campus applicants to seek input from students and student-led mental health groups on campus to enhance their reach to students in need of support.

We thank each of you for your leadership in supporting youth and young adults across the country and look forward to continuing to advance this important issue to safeguard the mental health of future generations.

Sincerely,

Active Minds

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Group Psychotherapy Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association Services

American School Counselor Association

---

[6] National Alliance on Mental Illness. (July 2025). *Trends in 988 and Reimagining Crisis Response State Policy*. Retrieved from: NAMI-2024StateLegBrief-03-ReimaginingCrisisResponse.pdf.

[7] Woolverton, et. Al. (2024). *Barriers and risk factors associated with non-treatment-seeking for suicidality onset during the COVID-19 pandemic among young adults.* Psychiatry Research, Volume 340. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2024.116095

[8] Thorne, K. & Ebener, D. (2020). *Psychosocial predictors of rural psychological help seeking. Journal of Rural Mental Health*, 44(4), 232-242. https://doi.org/10.1037/rmh0000159

[9] Chatmon, B. (2020). *Males and Mental Health Stigma.* American Journal of Men's Health, 14(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/1557988320949322

[10] McLaughlin, C. (2004). *Delays in Treatment for Mental Disorders and Health Insurance Coverage*. Health Services Research, 39(2), 221-224. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6773.2004.00224.x

[11] Sontag-Padilla et. Al. (2018). *Strengthening College Students' Mental Health Knowledge, Awareness, and Helping Behaviors: The Impact of Active Minds, a Peer Mental Health Organization.* Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 57(7). Retrieved from: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29960695/

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

Eating Disorders Coalition for Research Policy & Action

EDGE Partners

Inseparable

Institute for Educational Leadership

International OCD Foundation

International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance

Mental Health America

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of Social Workers

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

National Board of Certified Counselors

National Council on Problem Gambling

National Eating Disorders Association

National Federation of Families

National League of Nursing

National Register of Health Service Psychologists

Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation

Psychotherapy Action Network (PsiAN)

REDC Consortium

SAVE – Suicide Awareness Voices of Education

The Kennedy Forum

The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health

The Trevor Project

Trust for America's Health

Vibrant Emotional Health

Youth Villages