

Parity Now Coalition

August 31, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
H-107 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer:

We the undersigned 207 organizations are writing to urge you to bring H.R. 1424, the *Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act* to a vote this session. We greatly appreciate your strong, vocal endorsement of parity legislation, and would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our own commitment to its enactment, and our hope that it can be given the priority we feel it deserves on the House of Representatives' legislative agenda.

This landmark, bipartisan legislation, introduced by Representatives Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Jim Ramstad (R-MN), would prohibit insurance discrimination against more than 50 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness. Parity of insurance coverage for mental and addictive disorder treatment is a priority that we cannot afford to postpone any further, especially because coverage for addiction and mental illnesses is at an all time record low. A recent Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) survey of 2003 private expenditures on mental health and addiction spending found that private insurance payments accounted for only 9% of total addiction treatment expenditures and only 24% of all mental health treatment expenditures.

We applaud the recent approval of H.R. 1424—by a strong 33-9 vote—by the House Education and Labor Committee on July 18, 2007, and the holding of two hearings on the legislation by the Health Subcommittee of the House Ways & Means Committee and the Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee earlier in the year. Legislation to bring full equity to mental health coverage has been introduced repeatedly in the House since the 107th Congress, but has not received serious consideration until now. We are concerned, however, that delays in House floor consideration of H.R. 1424 will decrease its chance of enactment and will only continue the struggle of children and families to access needed mental health and addiction treatment services.

Because of the critical nature of this legislation, we urge you to bring H.R. 1424 to a floor vote by September 17, 2007 should the bills not receive formal consideration in the Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means committees. Parity legislation enjoys strong support among House members, as demonstrated by the H.R. 1424's 268 cosponsors and the House Education and Labor Committee vote.

We stand ready to assist you toward the goal of achieving fairness in health plans for all Americans.

Sincerely,

622 Communities Partnership
Addiction Recovery Advocates of Kentuckiana
Addiction Resources Council
Addiction Treatment Providers of New Jersey
AIDs Action
Advocates for Recovery – Colorado
Alabama Voices for Recovery
Alcohol and Addictions Resource Center
Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State
Alcoholism Council of New York
Alcoholism Council of the Cincinnati area, NCADD
Alliance for Children and Families
Alpha Project for the Homeless

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Association of Children's Residential Centers
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)
American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Suicidology
American Counseling Association
American Group Psychotherapy Association
American Mental Health Counselors Association
American Music Therapy Association

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c/o Carol McDaid, Capitol Decisions – 202-638-0326 – cmcdaid@capitoldecisions.com,
Scott Barstow, American Counseling Association – 703-823-9800 – sbarstow@counseling.org

American Probation and Parole Association
American Psychotherapy Association
American Public Health Association
American School Health Association
American Society of Addiction Medicine
A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)
Anna Westin Foundation
Anxiety Disorders Association of America
Arizona Council of Human Service Providers
Arkansas Association of Substance Abuse Treatment Programs
Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies
Association of Recovery Schools
Association of Substance Abuse Programs of Texas
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Association for Psychological Service
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Behavioral Health Services Association of South Carolina
Betty Ford Center
Boston Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programs
Bradford Health Services
BRiDGEs, Madison County Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc.
Bucks County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
Burke Council on Alcoholism and Chemical Dependency, Inc.
California Association of Addiction Recovery Resources
California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives
Caron Treatment Centers
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Child Welfare League of America
Clinical Social Work Association
Clinical Social Work Guild 49, OPEIU
Coalition of Louisiana Addiction Prevention and Service Providers
Coastal Horizons Center, Inc.
Colorado Association of Alcohol & Drug Service Providers
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)
Connecticut Association of Nonprofits
Council on Addiction of New York State, Inc (CANYS)
Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse of Sullivan County, Inc.
Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Santa Barbara, CA
Council on Substance Abuse - NCADD
County Alcohol & Drug Program Administrators Association of California
CRC Health, Inc.
Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
Detroit Recovery Project, Inc.
Division for Learning Disabilities of CEC
Dora Weiner Foundation

Drug and Alcohol Service Providers Organization of Pennsylvania
Drug and Alcohol Treatment Association of Rhode Island
Drug Education Council
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action Exponents
Faces and Voices of Recovery
Families for Depression Awareness
Families USA
Family Voices
Feeling Blue – Suicide Prevention Action Council
Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association
Focus on Community
Friends of Recovery of Delaware and Otsego Counties, Inc.
Friends of Recovery – Vermont
Gateway Foundation
Gaudenzia, Inc.
Georgia Council on Substance Abuse
GLAD House, Inc.
Greater Macomb Project Vox
Greenbriar Treatment Center
Hanley Center
Harbor Hall, Inc.
Hazelden Foundation
Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association
Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research
Iowa Substance Abuse Program Directors
Johnson Institute
Kansas Association of Addiction Professionals
Legal Action Center
Livengrin Foundation, Inc
Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc (LICADD)
Maine Alliance for Addiction Recovery
Maine Association of Substance Abuse Programs
Maryland Addictions Director's Council
Maryland NAMA
McHenry County Mental Health Board
McShin Foundation
Mental Health America
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Corporations of Massachusetts
Methadone Support Org
Michigan Association of Licensed Substance Abuse Organizations
Minnesota Association of Resources for Recovery & Chemical Health
Mission Missouri
Mississippi Association of Addiction Services
Missouri Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs
Missouri Recovery Network
Missouri Recovery Network – Jefferson City Chapter
Montana Addiction Service Providers

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Scott Barstow, American Counseling Association – 703-823-9800 – sbarstow@counseling.org

Mothers on Methadone Program, Kent Hospital, Warwick, RI
NAADAC – The Association for Addiction Professionals
Nantucket Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention, Inc.
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Advocates for Pregnant Women
National Association for Children of Alcoholics
National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers
National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders – ANAD
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
National Association of Mental Health Planning & Advisory Councils
National Association of School Psychology
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Association on Alcohol, Drugs and Disability, Inc.
National Consortium of TASC Programs, Inc.
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, St. Louis Area
NCADD, Greater Detroit Area
NCADD, Greater Kansas City
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
National Council on Alcoholism, Lansing Regional Area
NCADD, Long Beach
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Michigan
NCADD, New Jersey
NCADD, Northwest Florida
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Phoenix
NCADD, Sacramento Region Affiliate
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, South Bay
NCADD, Tampa Bay
NCADD, Tulare County
NCADD, Westchester, Inc.
National Development and Research Institutes, Inc. (NDRI)
National Eating Disorders Association
National Education Association
National Mental Health Awareness Campaign
National Recreation and Park Association
National Research Center for Women & Families
NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.
Nebraska Association of Behavioral Health Organizations
Nevada Alliance for Addiction Disorders Advocacy, Prevention and Treatment Services
New Hampshire Alcohol and Other Drug Service Providers Association
Northamerican Association of Masters in Psychology
North Carolina Substance Abuse Providers Association

North Dakota Addiction Treatment Providers Coalition
Northpointe Council, Inc.
Obsessive Compulsive Foundation
Ohio Citizen Advocates
Ohio Council of Behavioral Healthcare Providers
Oklahoma Faces and Voices of Recovery
Oklahoma Substance Abuse Services Alliance
Oregon Prevention, Recovery and Education Association
PAR – People Advocating Recovery
Parent-To-Parent, Inc.
Partnership for a Drug-Free America
Pennsylvania Recovery Organization – Achieving Community Together
Progress House, Inc.
RASE Project/Buprenorphine Coordinator Program
Recovery Center
Recovery Consultants of Atlanta
Recovery Network Foundation
Recovery Resources
Samaritan Village
SAVE – Suicide Awareness Voices of Education
School Social Work Association of American (SSWAA)
Society for Research in Child Development
South Dakota Council of Substance Abuse Providers
State Associations of Addiction Services (SAAS)
Students for Sensible Drug Policy
Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA) of Virginia
Substance Abuse Directors Association of Alaska
Substance Abuse Recovery Alliance of Utah
Suicide Prevention Action Network USA (SPAN USA)
Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug and other Addiction Services
Therapeutic Communities of America
The Second Road, Inc.
Tulare County Alcoholism Council, Inc
United Jewish Communities
United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society
United Neighborhood Centers of America
U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
Utah Behavioral Healthcare Network
Vermont Association of Drug & Alcohol Programs
Virginia Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors
Virginia Association of Drug and Alcohol Programs
Volunteers of America Alaska
Washington Association of Alcoholism and Addiction Programs
Wellstone Action
Williams Consulting

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