

March 21, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, The Capitol  
United States Congress  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
H-204, The Capitol  
United States Congress  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi,

The undersigned organizations are writing to share our views on the *American Health Care Act* (AHCA) as reported by the Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce committees. We are very concerned that the AHCA's proposed changes to our health care system will result in reductions in health care coverage, particularly for vulnerable populations including those suffering from addiction and mental illness, and we cannot support the bill in its current form.

We collectively represent consumers, families, providers, health care and social service professionals, advocates and allied organizations who are committed to meaningful and comprehensive policies to reduce the toll of substance use disorders and mental illness through prevention, treatment and recovery support services.

More than 20 million Americans currently have health care coverage due to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), including millions of Americans with addiction and mental illness. This coverage is a critical lifeline for these individuals, many of whom were unable to access effective treatment before the ACA's expansion of Medicaid eligibility to low-income adults, and its requirement that Medicaid expansion plans and plans sold in the individual and small group markets provide essential health benefits (EHB) including addiction and mental health treatment services at parity with medical and surgical services.

In the face of the opioid overdose and suicide epidemics, equitable access to a full continuum of mental health and substance use disorder treatment services, including medications to treat addiction and mental illness, must be an essential component of health care coverage. It is also critical that addiction and mental illness be covered on par with other medical conditions consistent with the *Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008* (MHPAEA). The *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) extended the applicability of MHPAEA to the small and individual group market as well as Medicaid expansion plans, which are currently required to offer addiction and mental health services at parity with medical and surgical services. As authors writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine* recently noted, "Repeal of the ACA would dismantle these protections and turn the clock back to a time when most Americans were subject to restrictive and inequitable limits on coverage for medication treatment and other supplementary treatments for opioid use disorder."

We are concerned that rolling back the Medicaid expansion, sunseting the EHB requirements for Medicaid expansion plans, and capping federal support for Medicaid beneficiaries will reduce coverage for and access to addiction and mental health treatment services, changes that will be particularly painful in the midst of the ongoing opioid overdose and suicide epidemics. Moreover, while the AHCA retains the EHB requirements for private plans, it repeals the ACA's actuarial value requirements for those plans. We are concerned that this could result in insurers offering mental health and addiction treatment benefits in name only due to higher costs and/or less robust benefits.

The Medicaid expansion in particular has led to significant increases in coverage and treatment access for persons with addiction and mental illness. In states that expanded Medicaid, the share of people with addiction or mental illness who were hospitalized but uninsured fell from about 20 percent in 2013 to 5 percent by mid-2015, and Medicaid expansion has been associated with an 18.3 percent reduction in unmet need for addiction treatment services among low-income adults. Rolling back the Medicaid expansion and fundamentally

changing Medicaid's financing structure to cap spending on health care services will certainly reduce access to evidence-based treatments and reverse much or all progress made on the opioid crisis last year. Moreover, the loss of Medicaid-covered mental and substance use disorder services for adults would result in more family disruption and out-of-home placements for children, significant trauma which has its own long-term health effects and a further burden on a child welfare system that is struggling to meet the current demand for foster home capacity.

The ACA's Medicaid expansion, EHB requirements for addiction and mental illness treatment coverage, and extension of parity protections to the individual and small group market have surely reduced the burden of the opioid misuse and overdose and suicide epidemics and saved lives. As you consider this legislation, we ask that you ensure addiction and mental health treatment benefits continue to be available to Americans enrolled in the individual, small and large group markets as well as Medicaid plans and that these benefits are compliant with the *Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act*.

Finally, throughout this process, we implore you to keep in mind how your decisions will affect the millions of Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness who may lose their health care coverage entirely or see reductions in benefits that impede access to needed treatment.

Sincerely,

Acadia Healthcare  
Adcare Educational Institute  
Addiction Education Society  
Addiction Haven  
Addiction Resource Council  
Addiction Services Council  
Addiction Policy Forum  
Addiction Treatment Center of New England  
Addictions Connections Resource  
Advocates for Recovery Colorado  
Advocates, Inc.  
Alabama Society of Addiction Medicine  
Alano Club of Portland  
Alcohol & Addictions Resource Center  
Alcohol/Drug Council of North Carolina  
Alternatives Unlimited, Inc.  
Amesbury Psychological Center, Inc.  
American Correctional Association  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal, Employees (AFSCME)  
American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy  
American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (AATOD)  
American Association of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Dance Therapy Association  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
American Medical Student Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society of Addiction Medicine

## A New PATH

Anxiety and Depression Association of America  
Arc of South Norfolk, The  
Arise & Flourish  
Arizona's Children Association  
Arizona Council of Human Service Providers  
Arizona Society of Addiction Medicine  
Arkansas Society of Addiction Medicine  
Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare  
Association for Behavioral Healthcare of Massachusetts  
Association for Community Affiliated Plans  
Association for Community Human Service Agencies  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)  
Association of Flight Attendants – CWA, AFL-CIO  
Association of Persons Affected by Addiction (APAA)  
Association of Recovery Schools  
Association of Recovery Community Organizations  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
A Stepping Stone to Success  
Atlantic Prevention Resources, Inc.  
Avanti Wellness  
BAMSI  
Bangor Area Recovery Network, Inc.  
Bay Cove Human Services  
Bay State Community Services, Inc.  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Behavioral Health Network, Inc.  
Better Life in Recovery  
Bill Wilson Center  
Boston Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programs, Inc.  
Boston Healthcare for the Homeless  
Boston Public Health Commission  
BreakingTheCycles  
Bridge of Central Massachusetts, Inc., The  
Bridgewell  
Brien Center for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, The  
Brookline Community Mental Health Center  
Bullhook Community Health Center, Inc.  
Burke Recovery  
California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals  
California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies  
California Society of Addiction Medicine  
Cambridge Health Alliance  
Camelot Care Centers, Inc.  
Cape Cod Healthcare Centers for Behavioral Health  
Capital Area Project Vox  
Casa Esperanza  
Casa Pacifica Centers for Children and Families  
Catholic Charities Family Counseling and Guidance Center  
Catholic Family Center  
Center for Human Development  
Center for Open Recovery  
Center for Recovery and Wellness Resources

Chautauqua Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Council  
Chicago Recovering Communities Coalition (CRCC)  
Child & Family Services, Inc.  
Child and Family Services of New Hampshire  
Children's Friend, Inc.  
Children's Home Society of Washington  
Children's Law Center  
Children's Services of Roxbury  
CleanSlate  
Clergy for a New Drug Policy  
Clinical and Support Options, Inc.  
Clinical Social Work Association  
Coalition of Addiction Students and Professionals Pursuing Advocacy (CASPPA)  
Colorado Society of Addiction Medicine  
Communities for Recovery  
Community Counseling of Bristol County, Inc.  
Community-Minded Enterprises  
Community Oriented Correctional Health Services (COCHS)  
Community Services Institute  
Community Solutions  
Community Substance Abuse Centers  
Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR)  
Connecticut Society of Addiction Medicine  
Counselors Obediently Preventing Substance Abuse (COPS)  
Cutchins Programs for Children and Families  
DarJune Recovery Support Services & Café  
Dash for Recovery  
Davis Direction Foundation - The Zone  
DC Fights Back  
DC Recovery Community Alliance  
Delphi Behavioral Health Group/MHD  
Desert Eagle Addiction Recovery  
Detroit Recovery Project, Inc.  
Dimock Community Health Center  
Disability Rights Pennsylvania  
Doctors for Recovery  
Dorchester Recovery Initiative  
Drug and Alcohol Service Providers Organization of Pennsylvania (DASPOP)  
Drug Prevention Resources  
East Bay Agency for Children  
Easy Does It, Inc.  
Eating Disorders Coalition  
Edinburg Center, The  
Eliot Community Human Services  
El Paso Alliance  
Engaged Recovery Community Services  
Faces and Voices of Recovery  
Facing Addiction  
Family Focused Treatment Association  
Family Service Association  
Family Service of Greater Boston  
FAVOR Greenville  
FAVOR Low Country

FAVOR Mississippi Recovery Advocacy Project  
FAVOR Pee Dee  
FAVOR Tri-County  
FED UP! Coalition  
Fellowship Foundation Recovery Community Organization  
Fenway Health  
FHR  
Florida Society of Addiction Medicine  
Floridians for Recovery  
Foundation for Recovery  
Friends of Recovery - New York  
FSA – Family Service Agency  
Futures of Palm Beach  
G III Associates  
GAAMHA  
Gandara Center  
Georgia Council on Substance Abuse  
Georgia Society of Addiction Medicine  
Gosnold on Cape Cod  
Granite Pathways  
Greater Macomb Project Vox  
Greater Philadelphia Association for Recovery Education  
Great South Bay Coalition  
Greater Cincinnati Recovery Resource Collaborative (GCRRC)  
Griffin Recovery Enterprises  
Harm Reduction Coalition  
High Point Treatment Center  
Hillview Mental Health Center, Inc.  
Home for Little Wanderers, The  
HOPE for New Hampshire Recovery  
Hope House Addiction Services  
Horizon Health Services  
IC&RC  
Illinois Association for Behavioral Health  
Indiana Society of Addiction Medicine  
International Nurses Society on Addictions  
Institute for Health and Recovery  
Iowa Association of Community Providers  
Italian Home for Children, Inc.  
Jackson Area Recovery Community  
Jewish Family and Children's Services (JF&CS)  
Joint Coalition on Health  
Jordan's Hope for Recovery  
Judge Baker Children's Center  
Juneau Recovery Community  
Justice Resource Institute (JRI)  
Kentucky Society of Addiction Medicine  
KEY Program, Inc., The  
Kyes 2 a 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance  
Lahey Health Behavioral Services  
Lakeshore Foundation  
Latah Recovery Center  
Legal Action Center

Lifeline Connections  
Lifeline Connections  
Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.  
Long Island Recovery Association (LIRA)  
Lost Dreams Awaken Center, Inc.  
Lotus Peer Recovery/SoberKerrville  
Lowell Community Health Center, Inc.  
Lowell House, Inc.  
LUK, Inc.  
Madison County Council on Alcoholism & Substance Abuse  
Magnolia Addiction Support  
Maine Alliance for Addiction Recovery  
Mariah's Mission Fund of the Mid-Shore Community Foundation  
Mark Garwood SHARE Foundation  
Martha's Vineyard Community Services  
Maryland-DC Society of Addiction Medicine  
Maryland House Detox  
Maryland Recovery Organization Connecting Communities (M-ROCC)  
Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR)  
Massachusetts Society of Addiction Medicine  
McShin Foundation  
Mental Health Association  
Message Carriers of Pennsylvania, Inc.  
MHA of Greater Lowell  
Michigan's Children  
Michigan Recovery Voices  
Michigan Society of Addiction Medicine  
Middlesex Human Service Agency, Inc.  
Mid-Michigan Recovery Services, Inc.  
Mi-HOPE - Michigan Heroin & Opiate Prevention and Education  
Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs (MACMHP)  
Minnesota Recovery Connection  
Minnesota Society of Addiction Medicine  
Missouri Recovery Network  
MOBER  
Mountain View Prevention Services, Inc.  
NAADAC – the Association for Addiction Professionals  
National Alliance for Medication-Assisted Recovery (NAMA)  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health  
National Alliance to End Homelessness  
National Association for Rural Mental Health  
National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers  
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD)  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association for Rural Mental Health  
National Association of Drug Court Professionals  
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)  
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors  
National Council for Behavioral Health  
National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence of E. San Gabriel & Pomona Valleys  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence--Greater Phoenix  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – Maryland  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – San Diego  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence of the San Fernando Valley  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse-St. Louis Area  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health  
National Health Care for the Homeless Council  
National Safety Council  
Navigate Recovery Gwinnett  
Nevada Society of Addiction Medicine  
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.  
New Jersey Society of Addiction Medicine  
New Life Counseling & Wellness Center, Inc.  
New Mexico Society of Addiction Medicine  
New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services  
New York Society of Addiction Medicine  
New York State Council for Behavioral Health  
NFI Massachusetts, Inc.  
NMSAS Recovery Center  
No Health without Mental Health  
North Charles, Inc.  
North Cottage Program, Inc.  
Northeast Center for Youth and Families, The  
Northern New England Society of Addiction Medicine  
Northern Ohio Recovery Association (NORA)  
Northwest Indian Treatment Center  
North Suffolk Mental Health Association, Inc.  
Northern Rivers Family Services  
North Carolina Society of Addiction Medicine (NCSAM)  
O’Brien House  
Ohio Society of Addiction Medicine (OHSAM)  
Oklahoma Citizen Advocates for Recovery & Treatment Association (OCARTA)  
Old Colony YMCA  
Open Doorway of Cape Cod  
Oregon Recovery High School  
Oregon Society of Addiction Medicine  
Overcoming Addiction Radio  
Partnership for Drug-Free Kids  
Partners in Prevention/National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence of Hudson County, Inc.  
P.E.E.R Wellness Center, Inc.  
PEER360 Recovery Alliance  
Pennsylvania Recovery Organization - Achieving Community Together - (PRO-ACT)  
Pennsylvania Recovery Organizations Alliance (PRO-A)  
Pennsylvania Society of Addiction Medicine  
People Advocating Recovery - PAR  
Phoenix Houses of New England  
Phoenix Multisport Boston  
Pine Street Inn  
Pivot, Alcohol and Substance Abuse Council of Jefferson County, Inc.  
PLR Athens

Pretrial Justice Institute  
Prevention Network OCAA  
Putnam Family & Community Services, Inc.  
RASE Project  
REAL- Michigan (Recovery, Education, Advocacy & Leadership)  
Recover Project/Western MA Training  
Recovery Allies Of West Michigan  
RecoveryATX  
Recovery Café Seattle  
Recovery Community Foundation of Forsyth  
Recovery Communities of North Carolina  
Recovery Community Of Durham  
Recovery Consultants of Atlanta  
Recovery Data Solutions  
Recovery - Friendly Taos County  
Recovery Idaho, Inc.  
Recovery is Happening  
RecoveryNC (Governors Institute on Substance Abuse)  
Recovery Point at HER Place  
Recovery Point of Bluefield  
Recovery Point of Charleston  
Recovery Point of Huntington  
Recovery Point of Parkersburg  
Recovery Point of West Virginia  
Recover Wyoming  
reGROUP  
Rhode Island Communities for Addiction Recovery Efforts (RICAREs)  
Riverside Community Care  
Robby's Voice  
ROCovery Fitness  
Rockland Council on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependence, Inc.  
Sandusky Artisans Recovery Community Center  
Sandy Hook Promise  
Serenity Sistas  
ServiceNet  
SMART Recovery  
Solano Recovery Project  
Solutions Recovery, Inc.  
Sonoran Prevention Works  
South Arkansas Regional Health Center, Inc  
Sound Community Services, Inc.  
South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc. (SMOC)  
South Bay Community Services  
South Carolina Society of Addiction Medicine  
South Central Human Relations Center  
South End Community Health Center  
South Shore Mental Health  
Spectrum Health Systems, Inc.  
SpiritWorks Foundation  
Springfield Recovery Community Center  
Springs Recovery Connection  
SSTAR  
STEP Industries



Steppingstone, Incorporated  
Student Assistance Services Corp  
Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Council of Rhode Island  
Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc.  
Tennessee Society of Addiction Medicine  
Texas Society of Addiction Medicine  
The Addict's Parents United (TAP United)  
The Alliance  
The Bridge Foundation  
The Bridge Way School  
The Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice  
The Chris Atwood Foundation  
The Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse  
The Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse for Greater New Orleans  
The DOOR - DeKalb Open Opportunity for Recovery  
The Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice  
The Kennedy Forum  
The Ohana Center  
The Recovery Channel  
The Rest of Your Life  
The Trevor Project  
The Village Family Services  
The Village Project, Inc.  
Tia Hart Recovery Community Program  
T.O.R.C.H Inc.  
Toward Independent Living and Learning, TILL, Inc.  
Treatment Communities of America  
Trilogy Recovery Community  
Two Guys and a Girl  
UMass Memorial Community Healthlink, Inc.  
United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness (USARA)  
Veterans Inc.  
Vermont Council of Developmental and Mental Health Services  
Vermont Recovery Network  
Victory Programs, Inc.  
Vinfen  
Virginia Association of Recovery Residences  
Voice for Adoption  
Voices of Hope for Cecil County  
Voices of Recovery San Mateo County  
Volunteers of America of Massachusetts, Inc.  
WAI-IAM, Inc. and RISE Recovery Community  
Walker, Inc.  
Washtenaw Recovery Advocacy Project (WRAP)  
Washington Federation of State Employees  
Washington Recovery Alliance  
Washington Society of Addiction Medicine  
Watershed Treatment Programs  
Wayside Youth & Family Support Network  
WEConnect  
Wellspring Recovery Services  
West Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine

WholeLife Recovery Community/ Arizona Recovery Coalition  
Wisconsin Recovery Community Organization (WIRCO)  
Wisconsin Society of Addiction Medicine  
Wisconsin Voices for Recovery  
Wyoming County CARES  
Yoga of Recovery  
Young Invincibles  
Young People in Recovery  
Young People in Recovery – Los Angeles  
Youth Opportunities Upheld, Inc.  
Youth Villages