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**To:** Transformational Resilience <tr@trig-cli.org>

**Subject:** Over 110 organizations applaud the introduction of the cost-saving bi-partisan "Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025"!

## **NEWS RELEASE**



### **For Immediate Release**

July 24, 2025

**Contact:** Bob Doppelt

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## **The ITRC and Over 110 Other Organizations Applaud the Introduction of the Bipartisan Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025**

**The legislation will slash the massive \$280 billion annual costs of the U.S. mental health epidemic and promote mental health peer-leaders in communities**

The International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC)\* and a growing list of over 110 other national, regional, state, and local organizations strongly endorse, and urge Congress to swiftly pass, the landmark *bi-partisan Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025* introduced today in the House by Co-Leads Reps. Paul Tonko (D-NY), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Don Bacon (R-NE) and original co-sponsor Rep. Kathy Castor (D-FL). The Senate companion bill was also introduced by Senators Ed. Markey (D-MA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and other co-sponsors.

The legislation will expand the U.S. approach to mental health—and slash the massive cost of mental health problems—by supporting community-led initiatives that use a public health approach to actively engage residents in preventing and healing mental health, behavioral health, and psychosocial issues resulting from all types of severe stresses and disasters.

The *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act* (CMWRA) was introduced in both the House and Senate in the last Congress (HR 3073/S 1452). The ITRC hosted two virtual Congressional Briefings on the legislation that each had 1,400 registered participants from across the U.S. Both Democrat and Republican members of the House spoke at the briefings. This indicated widespread support for the legislation.

The list of over 110 organizations that have endorsed the updated *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025* can be found [here](#).

"'Community is Medicine' for our nation's current epidemic of mental health and psychosocial problems," said **ITRC Coordinator Bob Doppelt**. "We strongly support the landmark bi-partisan *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025* because it is vital to actively engage communities in preventing and healing psychological, emotional, and behavioral issues resulting from accelerating toxic stresses, emergencies, and disasters."

"Mental health issues cost the U.S. economy more than \$280 billion annually, which is a financial burden comparable to an economic recession every single year. This bill will empower community members to be trained as peer leaders that help prevent and heal mental health issues and greatly reduce their skyrocketing costs. This is why we urge Congress to pass this urgently needed legislation," concluded Doppelt.

**Attached is a list of organizations that have endorsed HR 4744**

***The Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025***

**Comments from Leaders of Other Endorsing Organizations**

"The American Psychiatric Association strongly supports the *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025*, which would enhance communities' ability to confront the mental health impacts of disasters, emergencies, and other severe stressors," said **APA CEO and Medical Director Marketa M. Wills, M.D., M.B.A.** "This forward-thinking proposal would foster resilience and mental wellness in communities across the nation, and we encourage Congress to swiftly move it forward."

"We need to give equal attention to preventing and healing the psychological consequences of the increasingly frequent and intense natural disasters as we do on building more resilient physical infrastructure," said **Dr. David Shern, Senior Associate, Department of Mental Health Bloomberg School of Public Health, Senior Public Health Advisor at National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors, and former President/CEO of Mental Health America.** "It is critical that these population health issues be addressed systematically and quickly. Fortunately, we have tools to address this challenge, but need policies and investments to implement them. *The Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025* is essential in meeting these challenges and for this reason we urge Congress to enact the legislation."

"The American Public Health Association strongly supports the *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025*," said **APHA Executive Director Dr. Georges C. Benjamin.** "The nationwide mental health epidemic is a public health crisis, and the increasing incidence and intensity of extreme weather events, along with a multitude of other rising stresses, will continue to exacerbate the problem. APHA urges Congress to pass this legislation to help support communities by providing them with the resources they need to implement a comprehensive public health approach to improve mental wellness and resilience."

"The mental health impacts of accelerating stresses and disasters generated by the climate crisis constitute a public health crisis," said **Katie Huffling, Executive Director, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments.** "Unfortunately, our current health system is not prepared to adequately care for those burdened by rising adversities. Nurses understand the importance of the proactive and holistic approach that is the foundation of the *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025*. Passage of this legislation is a much needed step towards building resilience and promoting mental wellness in the face of climate change and for this reason the Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments strongly urges Congress to enact the legislation."

"It is essential to enact *The Community Mental Wellness and Resiliency Act of 2025* to create the social infrastructure throughout the United States needed to prepare our citizens for the array of mental health challenges resulting from persistent toxic stresses and acute disasters," said **Elaine Miller-Karas, Co-Founder and Executive Director Emerita at the Trauma Resource Institute**. "Our organization works across the U.S. and we have seen a systemic lack of preparedness to respond to the mental health challenges people face before, during, and after traumatic stressors and disasters. This policy is urgently needed to support coordinated community-based initiatives and for this reason my organization strongly urges Congress to enact the legislation."

"We know how to build strong resilient communities," said **Becky Turner, Director of Community Engagement for the Community Resilience Initiative in Walla Walla, WA**. "We follow the science, and we put our focus on weaving trauma-informed and resilience-based practices into the very fabric of our community. Data confirms that the use of resilience-based practices can help communities overcome adversity and related health outcomes. We now have renewed urgency to enact the *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025* to ensure all communities have access to this life-saving and revelatory framework. For this reason we urge Congress to pass the legislation."

"For too long, underserved communities, including Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities, have been overlooked, underserved, and pushed to the margins of America's mental health system," said **Juliet K. Choi, President and CEO, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum**. "The bipartisan *Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025* is a powerful, community-led response to this crisis. It puts resources where they belong: in the hands of trusted local leaders who understand what our communities need. The Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum proudly stands with leaders on both sides of the aisle, because advancing equity and building real, lasting mental health resilience is not optional for our communities, it's essential."

"There has never been a more important time to prioritize the well-being of our communities, and to focus on building the infrastructure of a world where people have the resources they need to heal and to thrive," said **Elizabeth Bechard, Public Health Manager, Moms Clean Air Force**. "*The Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025* is a vital step towards the kind of communities our children, families, and neighbors deserve."

### **Attached is an Overview of the Needs and Methods of the**

### **Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2025**

\* The International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC) is a network of mental health, social services, youth, community resilience, and other organizations working to establish methods to prevent and heal the mental health and psychosocial problems generated by toxic stresses, emergencies, and disasters. Website: <https://itrcoalition.org/>

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Bob Doppelt

Coordinator

International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC)

Always remember: *Community is Medicine!*

Website: [www.itrcoalition.org](http://www.itrcoalition.org)