

# COALITION FOR WHOLE HEALTH

August 4, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
H-232 Capitol  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
H-107 Capitol  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader Hoyer:

On behalf of Coalition for Whole Health, the undersigned organizations applaud your strong commitment to healthcare reform and share your urgency in the need to enact a healthcare reform bill this year. We commend your leadership and the efforts of the House Chairmen in reporting the bill out of the healthcare Committees and we look forward to working with you on the passage of a healthcare reform bill when the House reconvenes in September.

As national organizations in the mental health and addiction prevention, treatment and recovery communities, we are encouraged that the *America's Affordable Health Choices Act* (H.R. 3200) as introduced included addiction and mental health in the minimum benefits package and included language clearly preserving the Wellstone Domenici parity law and applying the parity standard to all qualified health plans.

Moreover, we are pleased that the Education and Labor and Energy and Commerce Committees strengthened H.R. 3200 by accepting amendments that will improve opportunities for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders receive the services and supports they need.

Specifically, we ask that the following provisions be included in any bill passed by the House:

- The inclusion of mental health and substance use disorders in the minimum benefit package
- The preservation of the Wellstone Domenici parity law and application of the law to all qualified health insurance plans
- The provision in the Education and Labor Committee-approved bill to include mental health and substance use disorder services, including screening and brief interventions, as covered preventative services
- The provision in the Energy and Commerce Committee-approved bill to include the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in the list of agencies that will be consulted for the development of a national prevention and wellness plan
- The provision in the Energy and Commerce Committee-approved bill to authorize workforce development grants for providers of mental health and substance use disorder services

Fully and equitably including mental health and addiction prevention, treatment and recovery support services and providers in national healthcare reform will lower healthcare costs and improve the quality

of life for millions of Americans. Inclusion of the above-described provisions in the final House healthcare reform bill will ensure that individuals and their families will have better coverage and access to vital mental health and substance use disorder prevention and treatment services.

Thank you again for your leadership. The Coalition for Whole Health looks forward to working with you and your staff as the *America's Affordable Health Choices Act* moves forward. If we can serve as a resource, please do not hesitate to contact Gabrielle de la Gueronniere at 202-544-5478, Carol McDaid at 202-737-8168 or Holly Merbaum at 202-737-7393.

Sincerely,

AIDS Action Council

Alliance for Children and Families

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (AATOD)

American Association of Pastoral Counselors

American Group Psychotherapy Association

American Nurses Association

American Occupational Therapy Association

American Psychoanalytic Association

American Public Health Association

American Society of Addiction Medicine

Anxiety Disorders Association of America

Association for the Advancement of Psychology

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Betty Ford Center

Betty Ford Institute

Bradford Health Services

The Carnevale Foundation

California Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors (CAADAC)

California Foundation for the Advancement of Addiction Professionals (CFAAP)

Campaign for Mental Health Reform

Caron Treatment Centers

The Carter Center Mental Health Program

Center for Integrated Behavioral Health Policy, Department of Health Policy, George Washington University Medical Center

Child Welfare League of America

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)

Clinical Social Work Association

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

Eating Disorders Coalition

Entertainment Industries Council

The Ethan King Foundation

Faces and Voices of Recovery

Friends of SAMHSA

Hazelden Foundation

International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC & RC)

Legal Action Center

McShin Foundation

Mental Health America

NAADAC-The Association for Addiction Professionals

National African American Drug Policy Coalition, Inc  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers  
National Association for Children of Alcoholics  
National Association of Drug Court Professionals  
National Association for Rural Mental Health  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD)  
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD)  
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD)  
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare

National Family Partnership  
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
National Foundation for Mental Health Partnership for a Drug-Free America  
Physicians and Lawyers for National Drug Policy  
State Associations of Addiction Services  
Suicide Prevention Action Network USA, a division of AFSP  
Therapeutic Communities of America  
Trichotillomania Learning Center  
United Neighborhood Centers of America  
U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (USPRA)  
The Watershed Addiction Treatment Centers  
Wellstone Action