

Nebraska Association of Behavioral Health Organizations

Nevada Alliance for Addictive Disorders Advocacy, Prevention & Treatment Services
New England National Alliance of Methadone Advocates

New Hampshire Alcohol & Other Drug Service Providers Association

New York AIDS Coalition
NJ Advocates—NJ Chapter of NAMA
Nicks Place

North Carolina Association of Alcoholic Residential Facilities

North Carolina Substance Abuse Providers Association

North Dakota Addiction Treatment Providers Coalition

Northern California Chapter of the National Alliance of Methadone Advocates

Northern Michigan Project Vox
Northpointe Council, Inc.

Ohio Citizen Advocates for Chemical Dependency Prevention & Treatment

Ohio Council of Behavioral Healthcare Providers

Oklahoma Faces and Voices of Recovery
Oklahoma Substance Abuse Services Alliance

Ophelia's Place
Oregon Prevention, Recovery, and Education Association

PAR—People Advocating Recovery
Parent-To-Parent, Inc.

Pennsylvania Recovery Organization—Achieving Community Together (PRO-ACT)

Puente de Vida
The RASE Project Buprenorphine Coordinator Program

Recovery Center
Recovery Consultants of Atlanta, Inc.

Recovery Resource Center
Volunteers of America Alaska

Royal Oak (Michigan) Save Our Youth Task Force

Recovery Resources
Rockland Council on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependence

Samaritan Village
Seaway Valley Prevention Council

The Second Road, Inc.
Society of Addiction Counselors of Colorado

South Carolina Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors

South Dakota Association for Addiction Professionals

South Dakota Council of Substance Abuse Providers

Spirit Works Foundation Center for the Soul

Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA) of Virginia

Substance Abuse Directors Association of Alaska

Substance Abuse Recovery Alliance of Utah

Suicide Awareness Voice of Education
Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug, & Addiction Services

Townsend Recovery, LLC
Transformation Center

Turning Point Recovery Center
Upstate Cerebral Palsy (NY)

Utah Behavioral Healthcare Network
Vericare Management

Vermont Association of Drug & Alcohol Programs

Virginia Association of Alcohol and Drug Counselors

Virginia Association of Drug and Alcohol Programs

Washington Association of Alcoholism & Addiction Programs

Western Massachusetts School Substance Abuse Counselors Association

West Virginia Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors, Inc.

MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA,
Alexandria, VA, February 27, 2008.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of Mental Health America and our 320 affiliates

across the country, I am writing to express our strong support for House passage of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007, H.R. 1424, at the earliest possible date. House passage of this historic legislation is a critical step toward enactment this year of a strong mental health parity law.

Mental health conditions are the leading cause of disability in the U.S. for individuals ages 15–44, and a leading cause of premature death, implicated in 90% of the more than 30,000 suicides annually in this country. While scientific advances have led to the development of a range of effective treatments, millions of Americans who need mental health care are routinely denied access to those treatments, with often tragic results.

Despite a compelling body of science documenting that such practices are anachronistic and costly to employee health and to the “bottom line,” employer-sponsored health plans routinely continue to set strict, arbitrary treatment limits and financial requirements on mental health coverage, while imposing no such limitations, or far less onerous limitations, on coverage for other illnesses. It is shocking, more than 40 years after the passage of civil rights laws and 15 years after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, that federal law still permits insurance discrimination on the basis of mental illness. Our polling has consistently shown that Americans abhor such discrimination and support the enactment of a strong mental health parity law. Congress can and must pass such legislation this year.

Please support improved access to needed mental health treatment. Please support H.R. 1424.

Sincerely,

DAVID L. SHERN,
President and CEO.

HONORING GEORGIA MILLER-MCCORKLE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Georgia Miller-McCorkle, who immigrated to the United States in 1980 from Trinidad, West Indies, where as a child she always excelled in school, getting merit cards along with excellent report cards. As a child, she was asked, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Her answer was always, “I want to be a teacher.”

At first, Ms. McCorkle settled in this country, got married, and raised five children: Sherwin, Vonetta, Fredericka, Tristan, and Robmesh. During that time, she worked at jobs fulfilling the basic home needs and helping to pay the bills, but something was missing.

Subsequently, she attended Brooklyn College, receiving her bachelor of arts, BA, degree in special education and her master's degree in special education from Long Island University. She joined the Department of Education in 1989, where her teaching skills included student-centered instruction, educational technology, parental involvement in student learning, critical thinking, individual learning plans, student motivation strategies, and active and meaningful learning activities.

Georgia Miller-McCorkle has worked with students from kindergarten through 12th grades, teaching science, music, and art, and was dean of students for 6 years. Further, she

counseled mild to profoundly mentally challenged young adults, supervising their daily activities and developing long- and short-term goals at a group home for mentally challenged adults for 3 years.

She provides cognitive and motor development skills for babies with developmental delays from birth to 3 years old in the Early Intervention Program and has been doing so for almost 12 years.

This remarkable woman is certified in: LSCI, Life Space Crisis Intervention; TCI, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention; FBA, Functional Behavioral Assessment; CPR, Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation; beginning sign language; and first aid.

Madam Speaker, it behooves us to recognize this woman who exhibits such passion for the teaching profession and still teaches the early childhood grades, K–2, enjoying her job to the fullest. She is indeed living out her dream.

MELISSA FUERST

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Melissa Fuerst of Blue Springs, Missouri. Melissa is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Melissa has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Melissa has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Melissa Fuerst for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scout Gold Award.

HONORING DONNA EASTMAN

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Donna Eastman for reaching an important milestone as a public servant to the citizens of Callender, Iowa.

For the past 25 years, Donna, a life-long resident of Callender, has served as the city clerk. As city clerk of a small town, Donna performs many diverse tasks for the community. She handles the utilities, budget, public records, city water, sewer, garbage and electric fees. Donna also files information for the mayor and city council and serves as a liaison between city residents and their elected officials. She has a strong understanding of the needs and desires of the community. With her experience and knowledge of the town she has become the town's unofficial ambassador.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending

Donna Eastman for her years of leadership and service to the people of Callender. I consider it an honor to represent her in the United States Congress and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING TWO-TIME STATE
CHAMPION IOTA LADY BULLDOGS

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Iota Lady Bulldogs basketball team, who again finished their season with a state championship after defeating Capitol 60–49 in strong fashion.

The March 1st win capped the season for Iota, who finished with an impressive 36–4 record. Even more remarkable, the Lady Bulldogs competed in the larger Class AAA for the first time. Capitol had previously dominated the class with five championships in the past 7 years. Over the course of their career, Iota's senior class won an impressive 225 games.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I applaud these student athletes who demonstrated a strong work ethic, determination, and teamwork. The people of Iota share their pride in this team and each of these girls who continue to play so admirably.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the two-time champion Iota Lady Bulldogs for their latest achievement.

CALLING FOR PASSAGE OF THE
FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION ACT

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, two recent events make it clear—the time has come for Congress to enact a Federal media shield.

Yesterday, the House passed legislation to create an independent ethics panel with the stated purpose of holding Members of Congress accountable to the highest ethical standard. Our Founders would have scoffed at the notion that a political panel, appointed by politicians, could hold the national legislature accountable. Our Founders knew the only agency in society with the power to hold the national government accountable is a free and independent press.

Last year, the House acknowledged this fact and passed the Free Flow of Information Act, creating a Federal media shield, with overwhelming bipartisan support. That bill now awaits action by the full Senate. The need for action by the Senate is also evident with the news that another reporter is facing court sanctions based on her unwillingness to disclose confidential sources.

Former USA Today reporter Toni Locy is facing financial ruin as the result of a ruling that she must pay fines that will escalate to up to \$5,000 per day unless she discloses her confidential sources for stories she wrote about the 2001 anthrax attacks. Her case and

the need for greater ethics scrutiny in Congress argue forcefully for the need for a Federal media shield statute.

The one, time-tested way of holding the Government accountable is ensuring the free flow of information to the American people. Threatening reporters or creating an ethics panel of politicians to police politicians will not do it.

Congress must enact a Federal media shield to ensure that those charged with the duty of holding Government accountable have the freedom and independence to do just that.

It is time for the Senate to vote on the Free Flow of Information Act.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. This legislation is named in tribute to Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone, whose work on behalf of the vulnerable was well known and well respected.

I also rise to thank my colleague from Minnesota, Congressman JIM RAMSTAD, for continuing Senator Wellstone's fight on behalf of those who the stigma too often attached to the issues of mental health and substance abuse has left voiceless. Mr. RAMSTAD's courage in sharing his experience with substance abuse and his dedication to passage of this legislation is the reason we are here today. This bill will help end the pattern of senseless and immoral discrimination against those suffering from mental illness and put to rest the outdated notion that these challenges are less legitimate or severe than physical ailments.

Mental illness left untreated affects all facets of our society and costs our economy over \$150 billion annually. Mental illness affects 50 percent of the homeless population in Minnesota, 70 percent of those in our juvenile justice system, and those with the highest unemployment rates. Health care costs double when diabetes and heart disease patients have co-morbid depression, and patients with mental illness and substance abuse disorders are often less responsive to treatment.

In addition, the burden that mental illness places upon the health and productivity of our Nation has long been underestimated. One in five adults and one in ten children have a mental illness. And over one-third of our returning servicemembers from Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from mental health problems.

The costs of untreated substance abuse are also high for families and our health care system. Studies have shown that 1 in every 5 Medicaid dollars spent on hospital care is related to substance abuse; health care costs for those dependent on drugs or alcohol is 100 percent higher than those without an addiction; and the costs to law enforcement and to employers are significant. Treatment makes a difference. A recent study showed that after treatment, family health care costs dropped 50 percent.

H.R. 1424 requires parity with co-payments, deductibles, and out-of-pocket expenses, and requires that limits on mental health and addiction care are no more restrictive than those on physical health. This legislation requires equality in out-of-network care and ensures coverage for mental illness and substance related disorders included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM.

It is time to pass this bill. We have all been affected in some way—ourselves, a family member, a friend, or colleague—by mental health or substance abuse. As we look to reform our health care system, mental health and physical care can no longer be looked at as separate entities. It is morally right and good for both our economy and our health care system. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this important bill.

HONORING THE OCCASION OF THE
50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EU-
ROPEAN PARLIAMENT

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the creation of the European Parliament.

As chair of the U.S. delegation of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, I would like to congratulate the European Parliament on its remarkable evolution. Fifty years ago, it was a small assembly with non-elected members, just four official languages, and only consultative powers; today it is a directly elected parliament with members speaking 23 languages, wide decisionmaking powers over legislation and budgeting, as well as control and scrutiny of the European Commission. The Lisbon Treaty, which is currently awaiting ratification, could enlarge the powers of the European Parliament even further.

Members of the European Parliament have also broadened their sphere of influence beyond domestic European affairs, engaging vigorously in our Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue. That dialogue has contributed to bringing the European Union and the United States closer together and continues to be of utmost importance, enhancing national security and stimulating economic growth on both sides of the Atlantic. The Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue has held bi-annual interparliamentary meetings since 1972, when a U.S. congressional delegation visited the European Parliament for the first time. Over 60 meetings later, I am proud to have played a role in enhancing and strengthening the ties between the European Union and the United States.

As a long-time advocate of transatlantic relations, I was delighted to host our latest interparliamentary meeting this past October in Las Vegas. During our meeting, we discussed a number of important transatlantic issues, including regulatory initiatives under the Transatlantic Economic Council, the rise of global anti-Semitism, and foreign policy challenges, such as the Middle East, Kosovo, Russia, and China.

I look forward to continuing our transatlantic dialogue at the next TLD meeting—in Ljubljana, Slovenia in May—and to continue following the future development of the European Union. Fifty years after its birth, the European Parliament is growing stronger each