



The Community Mental Wellness & Resilience Act

Sponsors: Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Senator Edward Markey (D-MA)

118th Congress

Supporting Organization Statements:

“Prevention through community initiatives is the cure to our nation’s current epidemic of mental health problems and to preventing future epidemics. We sincerely thank original co-sponsors Representatives Tonko, Fitzpatrick, and Bacon and co-sponsors, and Senator Ed Markey and co-sponsors, for beginning to expand the way our nation prevents and heals mental health problems by introducing the “Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023.” This much needed legislation will fund and support community-based programs that use a public health approach to strengthen the capacity of all residents for mental wellness and resilience for all types of adversities.”

❖ **Bob Doppelt, Coordinator of the International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC)**

“Mental health is more than self-care and individual health. It is a public health issue. As youth mental health continues to worsen, we must take action in innovative ways to provide support not only in traditional settings, but community settings as well. The Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act is an important step to making community mental health programs more accessible and impactful. This legislation gives communities the resources they need to take local action and address the issues most pressing to them.”

❖ **Marissa Byers (she/her), Mental Health America Young Leaders Council Alumni**

“The American Psychiatric Association strongly supports the Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act or 2023, introduced by Representatives Paul Tonko and Brian Fitzpatrick. This forward-thinking proposal would authorize grants focused on strategies to enhance the ability of communities to confront the mental health impacts of acute and long-term disruptions from natural disasters, as well as other public health impacts of climate change. APA strongly supports this legislation to foster resilience and mental wellness in communities across the nation.”

❖ **APA CEO and Medical Director Saul Levin, M.D., M.P.A.**

“Social workers are on the front-line assisting individuals and families that experience the accelerating distresses generated by extreme weather events and their many consequences. We know from

first-hand experience that forming mutual support networks in neighborhoods and communities is vital to preventing and healing the personal, family, and social problems that can result from these adversities. NASW strongly supports the Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023 because it will fund community efforts to build population mental wellness and resilience.”

❖ **Anthony Estreet, Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Social Workers**

“Over 40 counties/communities in North Carolina have multi-sector coalitions that are working to address the stress load of residents from various realms of “ACEs”—including Adverse Childhood, Adverse Community, Adverse Climate, and Atrocious Cultural Events. Funding provided by the Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023 could help sustain these grassroots organizations and the valuable work they are doing to educate, respond, and work on mental health prevention.”

❖ **Mebane Boyd, Resilience Community Officer, North Carolina Partnership for Children**

“The mental health impacts of climate change must be considered in discussions on how to address this public health crisis. Unfortunately, our current health system is not prepared to adequately care for those burdened by climate change. Nurses understand the importance of the proactive and holistic approach that is the foundation of the Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023. The rapidly worsening climate crisis requires multidisciplinary solutions along with input from and consideration for communities most impacted. Passage of the Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023 is a much needed step towards building resilience and promoting mental wellness in the wake of the growing climate crisis. Members of the Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments will continue to call on elected officials to pass this necessary legislation.”

❖ **Katie Huffling, Executive Director, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments**

“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. 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 2023 is essential in meeting these challenges.”

❖ **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**

“The Community Mental Wellness and Resiliency Act of 2023 is essential to create the infrastructure throughout the United States needed to prepare our citizens for the array of mental health challenges resulting from toxic stresses and acute climate events. Our organization works in 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 these traumatic stressors. This policy is urgently needed to support coordinated community-based initiatives and should be embraced as a national priority.”

❖ **Elaine Miller-Karas, Co-Founder and Director of Innovation at the Trauma Resource Institute**

"We know how to build strong resilient communities. 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. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we have renewed urgency to pass the "Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023," to ensure all communities have access to this life-saving and revelatory framework."

❖ **Becky Turner, Director of Community Engagement for the Community Resilience Initiative in Walla Walla, WA**

"America's current approach to persistent stresses and disasters is too reactionary, focused on providing support only after a traumatic event. The Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023 will build community partnerships to help residents prepare for and respond in constructive ways to adversities. Resilient communities reduce the mental health consequences that can ripple through the community and help residents heal when traumas do occur. We thank Representatives Tonko and Fitzpatrick and Senator Markey and all of the co-sponsors for their leadership on this important legislation."

❖ **Jesse Kohler, Executive Director of the Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice (CTIPP)**

Supporting Organizations

18th Street Arts Center; 350 Eugene; Able-Differently; Afterschool Alliance; Alliance for Positive Health; Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments; Aloka Earth Room; American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare; American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work; American Association on Health and Disability; American Association on Health and Disability; American Family Therapy Academy, Inc.; American Lung Association; American Psychiatric Association; American Psychological Association; American Public Health Association; Anxiety and Depression Association of America; Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU); BasicNeeds US, Inc.; Beaver Hollow; Birch Bay-Blaine Thrives; Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice; CAN Climate Action Net; Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative; Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative; Children's Environmental Health Network; Climate Generation; Climate Health Now; Climate Mental Health Network; Climate Psychiatry Alliance; Climate Psychology Alliance - North America; Climate Resilience Fund; Climate Resilience Leadership, LLC; Clinical Social Work Association; Clinical Social Work Association; Columbia Resilience; Committee for Children; Community Resilience Initiative; Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy; EARTHDAY.ORG; ecoAmerica; EcoInfluencer Academy; Educational Sustainability Mobilization Inc; Emory University's Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing; Factor 10 Inc.; Family Focused Treatment Association; Finger Lakes Community Schools; Futures Without Violence; Generation Up (GENup); Glenn County Office of Education; Good Grief Network; Health Care Without Harm; Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health; Indivisible ReSisters Walnut Creek; Inseparable; Interfaith Power & Light; International OCD Foundation; International

Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC); Jen Johnson, MS, MFA, LCMHC; Jennifer G. Gordon PhD PC; KLBRI; Lakeshore Foundation; Lieberman Group, Inc.; Mental Health America; Mental Health America of the Palm Beaches; Metta Foundation; Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action; Moms Clean Air Force; MUYUMPA - Centro de Formación en Terapia Comunitaria; NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals; National Association for Children's Behavioral Health; National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW); National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners; National Association of Regional Councils; National Association of School Psychologists; National Association of Social Workers; National Association of State Mental Health Directors; National Compadres Network; National Federation of Families; National League for Nursing; National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives; National Rural Health Association; Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies; New Leaf Counseling, A Private Practice, LLC; NH Healthcare Workers for Climate Action; One Shared Spirit; Organic Intelligence; Our Climate; Peace4Tarpon; Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine Chapter; Post Carbon Institute; Prevent Child Abuse New York; Prevention Institute; Reaching Resiliency; Resilience Climbing; Resilience United; Resilient Brunswick County; Rising Communities (formerly Community Health Councils); Rural Health Network of SCNY; Rural Opportunity Institute; Sabater Laboratory for Psychological Innovations Inc.; SabaterLAB Foundation; San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility; Save the Children; Schools for Climate Action; Seneca County Community Schools; SolaVida; Start Early; Susanne Moser Research & Consulting; The Blueford Group; The Children's Agenda; The Jed Foundation; The Kennedy Forum; The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health; The Resiliency Group; The Resiliency Initiative; The Resilient Activist; Thinkwell, LLC.; Towson Therapy Group; Trauma & Resilience Inc.; Trauma & Resilience Initiative Inc.; Trauma Healing Project; Trauma Informed Oregon; Trauma Resource Institute; Truly Well; UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center; Unitarian Universalist Mental Health Network; Vermont Climate and Health Alliance; Visible Hands Collaborative; Whatcom Family & Community Network; Win Climate