



The Community Mental Wellness & Resilience Act

House Sponsors: Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY),
Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Don Bacon (R-NE)
Senate Sponsor: Senator Edward Markey (D-MA)
119th Congress

The mental health crisis costs lives & billions

- In 2024, nearly **23% of U.S. adults (~60 million people)** experienced a diagnosed mental illness, with **5% facing severe conditions** ([Mental Health America](#))
- In 2022, the U.S. recorded **almost 50,000 suicide deaths**, the highest ever.
- A [2024 study](#) said **mental health problems cost the U.S. economy more than \$280 billion annually**, a financial burden comparable to an annual recession.

More frequent disasters are fueling the crisis

- **Community traumas** happen when an overwhelmingly stressful event or series of events, such as wildfires, hurricanes or floods, traumatize entire neighborhoods, towns, or cities
- The number of **billion-dollar weather disasters** has surged from an average of ~ 3 per year in the 1980s to **over 17 annually from 2014–2023**.
- From 2011 to 2024, **99.5% of congressional districts** experienced at least one federally declared major natural disaster.
- **72% of Americans reported their community faced at least one form of extreme weather**—severe floods, storms, heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, or rising seas ([Pew Survey](#)).
- [Research shows](#) that traumatic experiences due to **extreme weather events increase the risk of anxiety disorders**, especially the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder & **heat increases the mortality attributable to mental illness**, as well as the frequency of psychiatric emergencies.

Congress must act to promote mental wellness!

H.R. 4744, the Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act will:

- ❖ Establish a competitive grant program at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to create, operate, or expand community-based programs that use a public health approach to build mental wellness and resilience
- ❖ These programs will work to enhance the capacity of all residents for mental wellness and resilience to prevent and heal mental health problems generated by disasters and toxic stresses
 - Incorporates a set-aside to help address rural mental health disparities
- ❖ Community initiatives will build their own strategies to enhance and sustain population-level mental wellness and resilience, with specific attention to high-risk individuals

We must expand our approach to preventing & healing mental health problems!