



April 4, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
U.S. Senate
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
U.S. Senate
135 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House of Representatives
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
U.S. House of Representatives
1036 Longworth House Office
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators Murray and Blunt and Representatives DeLauro and Cole:

On behalf of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), I am writing to express NAMI's sincere appreciation to you for the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) Subcommittee's continued commitment to making critical investments that enhance mental health services. We applaud your bipartisan efforts and demonstrated effectiveness in securing investments to transform our nation's system of mental health care.

NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of people affected by mental illness. The communities we serve and advocate for are as diverse as our nation. NAMI is a voice for youth and adolescents, veterans and service members, individuals involved with the criminal justice system, those experiencing homelessness, family caregivers, and all Americans who are impacted by mental illness. We are all connected by the shared hope of new and innovative treatments, improved health care coverage, and support through recovery.

Thank you also for your recognition and subsequent efforts to support funding in your subcommittee's final bill to enhance our nation's crisis infrastructure, particularly with the investments for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) as well as the new Mental Health Crisis Response Partnership Pilot Program. These investments are critical to help our nation prepare for the launch of the new 988 suicide and mental health crisis number that will be available nationwide in July 2022.

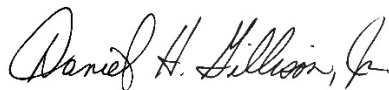
Every person that dials 988 for help for themselves or a loved one deserves to be connected to a continuum of care, but many communities are not yet ready to deal with the demand for crisis care. As a direct result of your leadership, Congress has made unprecedented investments in

public health preparedness, and we must ensure those investments are put to good use. In particular, we remain concerned that resources provided by the federal government will not be leveraged to their full extent. We cannot miss this historic opportunity to use these investments to ensure the successful launch of the 988 system and to provide every state with the capability to provide needed services for people experiencing mental health crises in response to 988 calls.

We continue to urge Congress to use its power of the purse, as well as its broad oversight and legislative authorities, to ensure all of our nation's communities have the necessary services in place for a successful rollout of the new 988 number, as well as related crisis services. This includes urging states to utilize previously appropriated American Rescue Plan Act funds for the rollout of the 988 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in all 50 states and U.S. territories – helping address the mental health epidemic directly tied to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Again, thank you for your leadership in transforming mental health care in America. If you have any questions or would like to discuss, please contact Hannah Wesolowski, NAMI's Chief Advocacy Officer, at Hwesolowski@nami.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Daniel H. Gillison, Jr." in a cursive script.

Daniel H. Gillison Jr.
CEO, NAMI – National Alliance on Mental Illness