Dear Chairwoman McMorris Rodgers, Subcommittee Chair Guthrie, and Vice-Chair Bucshon,

My organization, and the 54 organizations listed below, write today requesting that the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Health, hold a legislative hearing on HR 3073, the bipartisan Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act.

Our organizations work in the mental health and human services fields. We believe that HR 3073 will be a major step forward in helping to prevent and heal mental health problems among the people we work with, and nationwide, by supporting and funding community-based initiatives that strengthen their residents capacity for mental wellness and resilience for all types of adversities.

From first-hand experience we know that mental health problems are at very serious levels today. Last year, for example, the State of Mental Health in America survey by Mental Health America found that 21 percent of adults, or nearly 50 million Americans, are experiencing at least one diagnosed mental illness. Over 12.1 million adults have reported serious thoughts of suicide. Fifty five percent of adults with a diagnosed mental illness did not received any treatment. Many other American’s are experiencing undiagnosed psychological and emotional issues. A poll by the American Psychiatric Association, for instance, found that 53 percent of adults with children under 18 said they are concerned about the mental state of their children.

Added to these struggles are numerous accelerating stresses and extreme weather events Americans are experiencing nationwide. In the past 10 years, according to FEMA, 88.5 percent of all counties nationwide declared a natural disaster, including 95 percent of the 200 most populated counties. NOAA found that in 2023 the U.S. experienced 28 separate major weather disasters that each resulted in at least $8 billion in damages. These disasters can traumatize 20-40 percent of those who are directly impacted, 10-20 percent of disaster response workers, and 5-10 percent of the general public.

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chairwoman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Larry Bucshon M.D.
Vice-Chair
Subcommittee on Health
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC. 20510

April 4, 2024
who are not directly affected but know someone who is or view the events from afar. Consequently, the number of people who experience a mental health problem as a result of a disaster often outweighs those with physical injuries by 40 to 1.

These problems are not limited to urban areas. According to the Rural Health Information Hub, almost 23 percent of adults in nonmetropolitan areas reported having a mental illness. This includes much higher rates of depression and 64-68 percent higher rates of suicide compared to urban areas. One reason is that a majority of rural areas lack a sufficient numbers of mental health providers. In addition, many rural residents fear being stigmatized by others if they utilize mental health services.

Mental health services will remain extremely important. However, the number of certified providers will always be limited. We therefore believe it is important to expand how these issues are addressed by actively engaging local communities in developing strategies that strengthen individual, family, and community capacity for mental wellness and resilience to prevent and heal social, psychological, emotional, and behavioral struggles. These local initiatives are what the Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act would support.

For these reasons we ask the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Health Subcommittee, to hold a legislative hearing on HR 3073, the bi-partisan Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act.

Sincerely,

Bob Doppelt
Coordinator,
International Transformational Resilience Coalition

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
American Psychiatric Association
The Association for Addiction Professionals
North Carolina Partnership for Children
Rural Opportunity Institute
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Trauma-Informed Hampshire County
Restore Hope
Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative
Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy & Practice (CTIPP)
Trauma Informed Oregon

National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives
American Public Health Association
National Federation of Families
Alliance for Positive Health
Prevention Institute
American Counseling Association
Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness
Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Sabater Laboratory for Psychological Innovations
New Hanover County Resiliency Task Force
Mental Health America
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Lakeshore Foundation
The Resilient Activist
National League for Nursing
Organic Intelligence®
The Family Focused Treatment Association
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Peak Into Resilience
SabaterLAB Foundation
Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine
Community Resilience Initiative
Visible Hands Collaborative
Resources for Resilience
The Black Block Community Foundation
Committee for Children

Trauma Resource Institute
Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
American Association on Health and Disability
Trauma & Resilience Initiative Inc.
Mental Health America of the Palm Beaches
Inseparable
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
The Kennedy Forum
Climate Mental Health Network
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments
Unitarian Universalist Mental Health Network
Trauma Healing Project
Able Differently
Columbia Resilience
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved
Children's Environmental Health Network