



**Association for Behavioral
Health and Wellness**

*Advancing benefits and services
in mental health, substance use
and behavior change.*

November 13, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor, and Pensions
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor, and Pensions
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

I am writing on behalf of the Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) to express our support for the Bipartisan Health Care Stabilization Act of 2017. Thank you for leading the bipartisan efforts to stabilize the health insurance marketplace.

ABHW is the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health and wellness services. ABHW member companies provide specialty services to treat mental health, substance use, and other behaviors that impact health and wellness to 175 million people in both the public and private sector. Our association supports policies that expand access to evidence based, quality care.

By guaranteeing cost sharing reduction (CSR) payments, your bill takes an important step in providing more stability to the overall market. This funding ensures affordability for consumers, stability for the insurance market, and flexibility for states.

Much more still needs to be done to make CSR payments permanent and ensure persons with mental health and substance use disorders (MH/SUD) receive the health care they need. As you move forward with this, and additional health care legislation in the future, we remind you that insurance coverage for persons with MH/SUD is critical for whole health care. Additionally, Medicaid coverage benefits patients with MH/SUD, and we support policies that ensure access to medically necessary, evidence based behavioral health treatment for the Medicaid population. ABHW also supports the inclusion of an MH/SUD benefit in all policies.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you on bipartisan health care reform efforts. If you have any questions, please contact Rebecca Murow Klein on my staff at klein@abhw.org or (202) 449-7658.

Sincerely,

Pamela Greenberg
President and CEO