



**Association for Behavioral
Health and Wellness**

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

June 26, 2017

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

The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor, and Pensions
428 Dirksen 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) in support of the nomination of Elinore F. McCance-Katz, MD, PhD, for Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use. We are encouraged by the establishment of this new position at the Department of Health and Human Services and believe that it will be an asset to the behavioral health field.

ABHW is the national voice for companies 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. ABHW supports effective federal, state, and accrediting organization policies that ensure specialty behavioral health organizations (BHOS) can continue to increase quality, manage costs, and promote wellness for the nearly 170 million people served by our members.

Dr. McCance-Katz's vast expertise in the behavioral health field will be a benefit in this position. We appreciate her recognition of the importance of providing evidence-based treatment and look forward to working with her to ensure access to medically necessary, evidence-based behavioral health care.

Chief among the issues ABHW hopes to work with Dr. McCance-Katz on is 42 CFR Part 2 (Part 2) regulations. Part 2 federal regulations govern the confidentiality of drug and alcohol treatment and prevention records and are a barrier to integrated care. ABHW seeks to align Part 2 with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) for the purposes of treatment, payment, and operations to promote safe, effective, coordinated care for persons with opioid addiction and other substance use disorders.

Thank you, and we look forward to working with you on behavioral health issues that come before your committee.

Sincerely,

Pamela Greenberg
President and CEO

cc: Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions