



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 23, 2022

Contact: T-Kea Blackman

Email: blackman@abhw.org

Phone: (301) 915-6771

**ABHW APPLAUDS U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR PASSING THE
MAINSTREAMING ADDICTION TREATMENT (MAT) ACT**

Washington, DC (June 23, 2022) – The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for over 200 million people, commends the U.S. House of Representatives for passing important opioid use disorder treatment legislation known as the MAT Act.

On Wednesday, June 22, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act of 2022 (H.R. 7666) which includes the Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act (H.R. 1384). ABHW has long advocated for the MAT Act as it would increase access to treatment by eliminating the requirement that healthcare providers who want to treat opioid addiction with buprenorphine obtain a waiver, known as an X-Waiver, through the Drug Enforcement Administration.

The Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act of 2022 also reauthorizes several important behavioral health programs. Additionally, ABHW is particularly pleased that the bill contains multiple resources for maternal mental health and substance use disorders, including a focus on screening, treatment, and racial and ethnic disparities.

This comprehensive behavioral health legislation also embraces the collaborative care model by providing incentive grants to help increase the uptake of collaborative care. Driving integrated behavioral and physical health care is a policy priority for ABHW, and we support the collaborative care model's evidence-based approach. ABHW also believes it is imperative to have a continuum of crisis care for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. The provision in H.R. 7666 establishing a Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration will help achieve a crisis response continuum of care.

"ABHW strongly encourages the United States Senate to swiftly move companion legislation containing the MAT Act and the other provisions mentioned above," Pamela Greenberg, President and CEO, ABHW. "These changes need to be implemented as soon as possible to make much-needed improvements to our behavioral health system."

###

ABHW is the leading health plan association working to improve access and quality of care for mental health and substance use disorders. ABHW's members include national and regional

health plans who care for more than 200 million people. Together we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and addiction care. ABHW member companies - Aetna Behavioral Health, AmeriHealth Caritas, Anthem/Beacon, Centene Corporation/Magellan Health, Evernorth, a Cigna company, Kaiser Permanente, Molina Healthcare, New Directions Behavioral Health, and Optum.