



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW) Outlines Health Policy Priorities Requiring Immediate Attention to the 119th Congress

Washington, D.C. — The Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW), the national voice for payers that manage behavioral health insurance benefits for 200 million people, [sent a letter](#) to the 119th Congress, outlining key health policy priorities that require immediate attention.

In the letter, ABHW highlights the following priorities that would address critical behavioral health care needs of Americans:

- **Extend Telehealth Flexibilities:** With telehealth flexibilities set to expire on March 31, 2025, ABHW urges Congress to improve access to care and extend the Medicare telehealth flexibilities and delay the in-person requirement for telemental health services in Medicare for two years. ABHW also urges Congress to extend first dollar coverage for telemental health services under high-deductible health plans.
- **Reauthorize the SUPPORT Act:** ABHW urges Congress to reauthorize the Substance Use Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities (SUPPORT) Act, which expired on September 30, 2023 and is critical to effectively addressing substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health conditions.
- **Preserve Enhanced Premium Tax Credits:** ABHW urges Congress to support the passage of the Health Care Affordability Act of 2025. Without congressional action, these tax credits, which have made it possible for more than 21 million Americans to purchase coverage on their own, will expire at the end of 2025.
- **Increase Community Health Center Funding:** ABHW urges Congress to increase funding for Community Health Centers to ensure continued access to cost-efficient, quality primary care and behavioral health services.

“ABHW is committed to improving outcomes for whole-person care for all individuals and communities,” said ABHW President and CEO Debbie Witchey. “One in five adults in the U.S. experience a mental illness each year, and we face record-high rates of suicide and overdose. By addressing these key legislative priorities that we outlined, Congress can make a meaningful impact on the lives of millions of people and ensure that much-needed mental health and substance use disorder care is readily accessible.”

ABHW appreciates the opportunity to share our immediate health policy priorities with the new 119th Congress and looks forward to working together on our shared goal to further access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment.

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ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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 that care for more than 200 million people. Together, we work to reduce stigma and advance federal policy on mental health and substance use disorder care. ABHW member companies – Aetna, a CVS Health Company; CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield; Centene Corporation; Caredon Behavioral Health, an Elevance Health Company; Evernorth; Kaiser Permanente; Lucet; Magellan Health; Molina Healthcare; Optum; and PerformCare, a subsidiary of AmeriHealth Caritas. To learn more, visit www.abhw.org and follow us on [X](#) and [LinkedIn](#).