

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2017

The Honorable Tom Price
Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Price,


We are writing today to urge you to commence the rulemaking process to implement the historic, bipartisan provisions to improve access to care for those with eating disorders included in Section 13005, 13006, and 13007 of the 21st Century Cures Act (Public Law 114-255). Over 30 million Americans suffer from a clinically significant eating disorder during their lifetime, but experts estimate that only one in ten people receive treatment. The 21st Century Cures Act takes significant steps to improve prevention, treatment, and diagnosis to better support those struggling with an eating disorder.

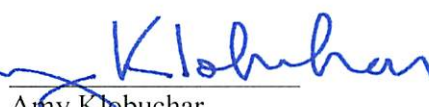
With your support, Congress passed the 21st Century Cures Act with large, bipartisan majorities in the House and Senate in December 2016. The bill placed a strong emphasis on improving our broken mental health care system. We ask that you pay close attention to the mental illness with the highest mortality rate – eating disorders. The eating disorder provisions included in the law, derived from the bipartisan Anna Westin Act of 2015 (H.R. 2515/ S. 1865), were designed to improve eating disorder early detection by our health professionals, increase access to quality and affordable treatment for eating disorders under mental health parity, and provide the public with resources to help prevent and identify the disorder. As such, we urge you to swiftly begin the process of implementing these reforms through the rulemaking process. Specifically, we ask that you conduct a streamlined process by incorporating the eating disorders parity rulemaking into existing mental health parity regulations. We also urge you to ensure the revised regulations facilitate increased access to quality and affordable treatment for eating disorders through mental health parity and provide health professionals the tools for early identification.

Taking swift action to implement these provisions is critical to ensuring meaningful access to treatment for men and women with an eating disorder. Studies show that when an eating disorder reaches a severe stage and necessary life-saving levels of treatment (such as residential treatment, partial hospitalization, and intensive outpatient programs) is prematurely discontinued or not provided, relapse is often inevitable. For the severe and complex illness of eating disorders, relapse leads to increased and costly emergency room admissions and a need for more intensive treatment, resulting in an exorbitant cost to our economy and American families.

It is for these reasons that we strongly urge you to initiate this rulemaking process for these eating disorders provisions, with the goal of saving lives and cutting costs for families across the nation.

Sincerely,


Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator


Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator


Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator



Al Franken
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



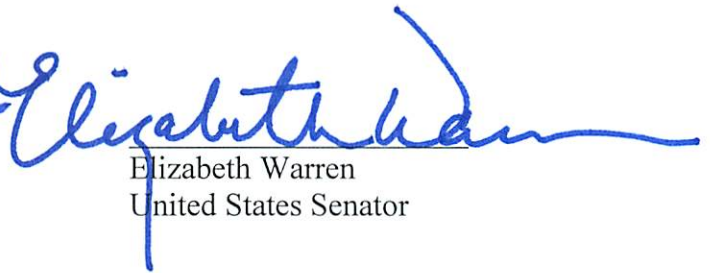
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator