



PATRICK J. KENNEDY

June 22, 2015

Dear Congressman Deutch and Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen:

We are writing to express our appreciation for your introduction of the Anna Westin Act of 2015 to help individuals affected by eating disorders get the treatment they need.

As your legislation aims to clarify, it was our Congressional intent that the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (the Parity Law) apply to all behavioral health disorders, including eating disorders and residential treatment services for these disorders.

Eating disorders affect more than 14 million Americans and have the highest mortality rate out of any mental illness. The personal costs of these disorders are well demonstrated by the powerful stories of individuals and families across the country, including that of Kitty Westin's daughter Anna Westin and her experience and death caused by her eating disorder.

For many of these individuals, residential treatment is essential for recovery as it provides necessary intensive care and services. Further, patients with eating disorders typically require more than 6 weeks of inpatient therapy for recovery and insufficient treatment stays are associated with relapse and death. That is why it is critical that health plans not only cover these services but do not place more stringent restrictions on the cost or duration of treatment.

We thank you for your efforts and wish you the best of luck going forward with the Anna Westin Act of 2015.

Sincerely,

Patrick Kennedy

Jim Ramstad