September 19, 2016

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations from the eating disorders community, we urge you to bring S. 2680, the Mental Health Reform Act of 2016, for consideration on the Senate floor. The House of Representatives passed H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, almost unanimously with a vote of 422-2. It is now the Senate’s turn to act. Mental illness is widely prevalent in the United States. Over 68 million Americans have experienced mental illness in the past year, which is more than 20 percent of the total population of the United States.

In the United States, 30 million Americans experience a clinically significant eating disorder at some time in their life, such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder. Eating disorders typically have a higher prevalence rate in women than men and have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness.

On March 16, 2016, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee voted unanimously to advance S. 2680. Notably, this bipartisan bill strengthens federal coordination of mental health resources, increases reporting on mental health parity, advances integrated service delivery, supports the mental health workforce, and increases early access to mental health services. It also includes provisions from the bipartisan Anna Westin Act of 2015 (S. 1865), led by Senators Amy Klobuchar, Kelly Ayotte, Tammy Baldwin, and Shelley Moore Capito, which clarify the Mental Health Parity Act of 2008 to include eating disorder benefits, including residential treatment as a covered equivalent, as well as training for health professionals to early identify eating disorders.

We now need your leadership to pass mental health reform and bring millions of Americans and their families help and hope. Thank you for your consideration. We stand ready to work with you to ensure this critical first step in mental health reform can be sent to the President’s desk for signature this year.

Sincerely,

Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action

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www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org
Executive Circle
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The Emily Program
The Emily Program Foundation
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Monte Nido Treatment Center
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Advocacy Circle
Binge Eating Disorder Association
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Laureate Eating Disorders Program
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Castlewood Treatment Center
Center for Discovery
Eating Disorder Center of Denver
Eating Disorder Hope
Mirasol Eating Disorder Recovery Centers
Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association
Park Nicollet Melrose Center
Rosewood Centers for Eating Disorders
Walden Behavioral Care
Wrobel & Smith, PLLP

Hope Circle
Aloria Health
BingeBehavior.com
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The Eating Disorder Foundation
Eating Disorder Therapy LA
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Monte Nido
Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders
The Renfrew Center
Monte Nido
The Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association (MEDA)

Castlewood at The Highlands
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Castlewood PHP  Ballwin, MO
Castlewood IOP and Business Offices  Fenton, MO
International Federation of Eating Disorder Dietitians  St. Louis, MO
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International Federation of Eating Disorder Dietitians  New York, NY
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The Renfrew Center  New York, NY
Residential Eating Disorders Consortium  New York, NY / National Eating Recovery Center  Cincinnati, OH
International Federation of Eating Disorder Dietitians  Cincinnati, OH
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The Emily Program  Cleveland, OH
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