



April 1, 2016

The Honorable Richard Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Executive Circle

Avalon Hills
Eating Recovery Center
The Emily Program
The Emily Program Foundation
Kantor & Kantor, LLP
Oliver-Pyatt Centers
Residential Eating Disorders Consortium
Veritas Collaborative

Policy Circle

Academy for Eating Disorders
The Renfrew Center

Leadership Circle

Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness
Gail R. Schoenbach FREED Foundation
Monte Nido Treatment Center
Reasons Eating Disorder Center
Remuda Ranch

Advocacy Circle

Binge Eating Disorder Association
Center for Change
International Association of Eating Disorder
Professionals Foundation
Laureate Eating Disorders Program
Timberline Knolls

Support Circle

Cambridge Eating Disorder Center
Castlewood Treatment Centers
Center for Discovery
Eating Disorder Center of Denver
Eating Disorder Hope
Focus Treatment Centers
Inner Door Center
Mirasol Eating Disorder Recovery Centers
Multi-Services Eating Disorders Association
Park Nicollet Melrose Center
Rosewood Centers for Eating Disorders
Walden Behavioral Care
Wrobel & Smith, PLLP

Hope Circle

American Anorexia and Bulimia Association
of Philadelphia
BingeBehavior.com
Casa Palmera
Eating Disorder Coalition of Iowa (EDCI)
The Eating Disorders Center at Rogers
Memorial Hospital
EDN of Maryland
FEAST
FINDINGbalance
Gurze Books
The International Federation of Eating
Disorders Dietitians
McCallum Place Eating Disorder Centers
The National Association of Anorexia
Nervosa and Associated Eating Disorders
PENED/Footsteps for Recovery
Theravive

Dear Senator Durbin and Senator Collins:

On behalf of the Eating Disorders Coalition, a coalition of eating disorders treatment providers, advocacy organizations, and individuals experiencing eating disorders across the nation, we are writing to laud your introduction of the Mental Health on Campus Improvement Act (S. 2685).

The Eating Disorders Coalition is pleased that S. 2685 incorporates provisions the establish of a grant program to assist colleges and universities in providing direct student mental health services, as well as training for and outreach to students, staff, and families, similar to provisions within the bipartisan, bicameral Anna Westin Act of 2015 (S. 1865/H.R. 2515).

Furthermore, S. 2685 contains provisions that would significantly improve the lives of students experiencing eating disorders. For example, in Section 520E-3, the legislation provides for improvements in mental health intervention and access to treatment within colleges. Studies show that the average age of onset of eating disorders is 12-13 years, and eating disorders often become fully developed during college. The improvements to higher education systems provided by S. 2685 will likely lead to an increase in early identification and intervention for people with all mental illnesses including eating disorders, as well as allow those suffering from these illnesses to continue their education.

The transitional period into college settings is a potentially vulnerable time for many students, who may confront mental health concerns for the first time. Colleges and universities, however, often have limited resources and are unable to meet the mental health needs of their student populations. This results in perpetuating stigma, long waits to see counselors, a lack of critical outreach efforts, and too few students seeking counseling. This bipartisan legislation has the ability to greatly expand mental health awareness and access to screenings and support services on college and university campuses.

On behalf of all individuals and families who have been impacted by an eating disorder or other mental health issues, we are thankful for your leadership. Your dedication and commitment to these causes is so important, and we look forward to working together toward these much needed practices.

Sincerely,

Johanna Kandel
Board President
Eating Disorders Coalition