

Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage

May 17, 2006

Senator Pete V. Domenici
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Edward M. Kennedy
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Gordon H. Smith
404 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Tom Harkin
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Mike DeWine
140 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators:

The members of The Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage congratulate you on establishing the Senate Caucus on Mental Health Reform. Your leadership in the Caucus on Mental Health Reform gives heightened visibility to the importance of making mental health a national priority, a commitment we heartily endorse. We greatly appreciate your dedication to sharing that vision with your colleagues, and we stand ready, individually and collectively, to support your work.

Our Coalition was formed a decade ago to advocate for passage of federal mental health parity legislation. We urge the caucus to re-introduce the Senator Paul Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act. We encourage this legislation to be introduced this month, as May is Mental Health Month. Introduction of the bill by the Caucus would spur action on an issue that unites a broad spectrum of national interests. We would be pleased to participate in making passage of this long overdue legislation a reality.

Parity legislation is widely seen as a core element of mental health reform, and introduction of this critical bill, which garnered 69 co-sponsors in the last Congress, would give important momentum to mental health reform goals we all share.

Thank you again for your tireless support of mental health issues, and for considering this suggestion.

Sincerely,

Mental illness coverage. It's time to be fair by treating it equally in health care.

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