

October 29, 2024

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Baldwin, and Ranking Member Capito:

The undersigned mental health, suicide prevention, substance use recovery, and patient advocacy organizations write to express our strong support for robust investment in the Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Program (CSP) under the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

Recent CDC data show that more than 49,000 lives were lost to suicide in the United States in 2022, an increase in deaths of nearly 3% over 2021.¹ In 2023, 12.8 million adults aged 18 or older had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year, 3.7 million made suicide plans, and 1.5 million attempted suicide². Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the United States, and the third leading cause of death for youth and young adults aged 10-24, with most deaths impacting those aged 20-24.³

We understand that difficult decisions lie ahead before the finalization of the federal budget for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25). Given the substantial impact of suicide on individuals, families, and communities across the nation each year, and the positive outcomes from the CDC's CSP Program to date, we respectfully urge you to fund the CSP at \$38 million, as provided in the Senate's LHHHS appropriations bill.

Established in 2020, the CSP currently funds 24 initiatives nationwide through cooperative agreements designed to implement and evaluate a comprehensive public health approach to suicide prevention, with a special focus on populations that are disproportionately affected by suicide. The CSP addresses the multifaceted nature of suicide through a range of innovative and effective strategies, employing a framework using data-driven methods to tackle the problem through different approaches tailored to each population. These approaches include community-based prevention programs, research

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) Fatal Injury Reports. <https://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate.html>

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2024). Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2023 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (HHS Publication No. PEP24-07-021, NSDUH Series H-59). Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2023-nsduh-annual-national-report>.

³ CDC, WISQARS.

into effective suicide prevention strategies, and implementation of best practices. Through collaborations with local organizations, the CSP also supports suicide prevention training for community leaders, educators, and health professionals. This ensures that suicide prevention efforts are both localized and scalable, addressing the unique needs of different communities while fostering a culture of support and resilience.

These CSP initiatives have led to significant benefits, including decreases in suicide rates and increased training, awareness, and data collection. CSP investments, for example, have resulted in a 6.5% reduction in suicide rates from 2019-2021 among veterans and servicemembers served by CSP initiatives.⁴ In Connecticut, the CSP's focus on youth ages 10-24 contributed to a 20% reduction in suicide rate for this population.⁵ In Tennessee and Vermont, where the CSP focuses programming on rural populations, there has been an 8.76% and 3.64% decrease in suicide rates, respectively.⁶ In North Carolina in 2023, the CSP team implemented Faith Leaders for Life (FLFL) training to supplement the mental health provider workforce shortage, training 43 clergy and faith leaders who reach an estimated 24,000 congregants in North Carolina.⁷ Georgia's CSP team focused on collecting vital data on first responders and military veterans in the state and their access to health and suicide prevention resources.⁸ This data then served as the basis for educational training and informative materials to raise awareness among first responders and veterans, their families, and communities.

By promoting mental health awareness, encouraging early intervention, and supporting individuals in crisis, the CSP plays a pivotal role in addressing one of the most serious public health challenges of our time. We urge you to provide robust funding for the CSP to save lives and foster hope, and we thank you for ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of all Americans through the FY25 appropriations process.

Sincerely,

Addiction Professionals of North Carolina
American Academy of Emergency Medicine
American Academy of Nursing
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association for Psychoanalysis for Clinical Social Work
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Medical Women's Association
American Mental Health Counselors Association

⁴ Are CDC's Priorities Restoring Public Trust and Improving the Health of the American People? Hearing before the U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health. 118th Congress (2024). Joint Written Testimony. <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF14/20240723/117526/HHRG-118-IF14-Wstate-ArwadyMDMPHA-20240723.pdf> (Accessed October 15, 2024).

⁵ *Impact of CDC's Suicide Prevention Programming*. Atlanta: CDC Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Program, July 2024. (updated October 2024).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Comprehensive Suicide Prevention: Success Stories. In *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Suicide Prevention*, updated August 1, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/csp-profiles/success-stories.html> (accessed October 4, 2024).

⁸ *Id.*

American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association Services
American Public Health Association
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Big Cities Health Coalition
Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, JHU
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
Clinical Social Work Association
Committee for Children
Crisis Text Line
Employees Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA)
Faces & Voices of Recovery
Futures Without Violence
Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice
Huntington's Disease Society of America
Inner Explorer
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association for County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD)
National Association for Rural Mental Health (NARMH)
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Behavioral Health Association of Providers
National Board for Certified Counselors
National Children's Alliance
National League for Nursing
National Network of Public Health Institutes
Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health
Prevention Institute
Providence
Psychotherapy Action Network
Safe States Alliance
Sandy Hook Promise
School Social Work Association of America
Society for Public Health Education
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health
Trust for America's Health
Vibrant Emotional Health

CC:

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate