

SUPPORT THE HELPING FAMILIES IN MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS ACT!!!



On December 12, U.S Representative Tim Murphy (who is also a psychologist) introduced The Helping Families In Mental Health Crisis Act. The act comes after a year of Rep. Murphy holding investigations on how the mental health system in America is broken and the bill aims to fix many of the fractures in the system.

Of the bill Rep. Murphy says, "More than 11 million Americans have severe schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression yet millions are going without treatment and families struggle to find care for loved ones. The federal government's approach to mental health has been a chaotic patchwork of antiquated programs and ineffective policies across numerous agencies. Sadly, patients end up in the criminal justice system or on the streets because services are not available. The Helping Families In Mental Health Crisis Act fixes the nation's broken mental health system by focusing programs and resources on psychiatric care for patients & families most in need of services."

You can [click here](#) to read a summary of the bill.

You can [click here](#) to read NAMI's letter of support of the bill.

You can [click here](#) to read the transcript of Rep. Murphy introducing the bill.

NAMI-NYS strongly supports the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act.

NAMI-NYS President Thomas Easterly says, "NAMI-NYS applauds Congressman Murphy for introducing this landmark legislation. I am extremely encouraged by the scope of the bill. I also deeply appreciate the fact that it acknowledges and addresses the struggles families face when trying to get the proper care for our loved ones living with a mental illness."

NAMI-NYS Boardmember Steve Dvorin, MD, says, "All features of the proposed legislation appeal to me, but a couple of elements that especially resonate with me are:

Modification of HIPAA rules will allow providers to be more responsive and more helpful to family members who are first-responders to their loved ones' unusual beliefs and actions. Providers will be relieved to know that they can be protected by fewer restrictions in regard to what information can be disclosed and what guidance can be offered. Families will be less frustrated, more collaborative, and better informed. Their loved ones will be better served by informed family interventions.

In a time of great concern about health-related issues, our community is particularly deficient in their

knowledge and understanding of serious mental illness. Anti-treatment advocates should not confuse the issue with idiosyncratic, scientifically unfounded information that only serves to delay effective treatment. SAMHSA and related agencies should have no role in supporting non-evidence based practices or the recommendations of anti-treatment groups. Knowledge is mastery. Let's ensure that government sponsors of information will only promote information that is based on high quality studies and research."

NAMI-NYS First-Vice President Paul Capofari says, ""There are many aspects of the bill to support, but I would say that the reform of HIPAA would get my vote. Family members who are actively trying to get their loved one into treatment are often prevented from doing so by the hospital or Doctor refusing to speak to the family due to HIPPA."

NAMI-NYS Board Member Barbara Biasotti says, "Exceptions to HIPPA are so necessary to help people get treatment that they are too sick to access themselves while wandering the streets in a psychotic state of mind. There's nothing better than evidence based programs to ensure success in our nation's goal to improve the lives of people suffering so much from severe mental illness through treatments proven by replicated studies done by our nation's higher education institutions!"

**CALL YOUR HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE TODAY AND ASK THEM TO
SUPPORT THE HELPING FAMILIES IN MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS
ACT**

[Click here](#) to find the New York State Congressional delegation.