



National Association for Rural Mental Health

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JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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House Mental Health Caucus Re-established

NACBHDD and NARMH are absolutely delighted to report that the House Mental Health Caucus has been re-established. Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (D-CA-32nd District) engaged in a successful effort to restore the Caucus for the 114th Congress, now in session. Already, numerous Republican and Democratic Members have joined the Caucus.

The Mental Health Caucus has long been essential to our field. Out of the Caucus has come vital, landmark legislation. Notably, this has recently included the 2008 Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act and key features of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Just last year, we hoped to see the Caucus identify and put forward the positive and non-controversial features of the Ron Barber and the Tim Murphy mental health bills.

In our current political system, the Caucus has served as a vital neutral ground where all sides can come together, hold respectful discussion, and compromise on essential mental health legislation. Such open discussion and compromise are critical features of American Democracy. The American people want this, and we want it as well.

In the summer of 2014, the Caucus was allowed to lapse. This lapse created a very serious gap in our democratic process throughout the remainder of the 113th Congress. NACBHDD and NARMH subsequently sent a letter to House Speaker John Boehner objecting strongly to the disappearance of the Caucus.

Our hats are off to Congresswoman Napolitano for her vision, courage, and persistence in re-establishing the House Mental Health Caucus. All Americans

are grateful for her effort, especially the many millions who suffer from mental health conditions.

FURTHER BACKGROUND: On August 19, 2014, we reported the disappearance of the US House of Representatives Mental Health Caucus (<http://www.behavioral.net/blogs/ron-manderscheid/listen-ever-so-carefully-us-house-mental-health-caucus-has-disappeared-very-v>).

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