



House Overwhelmingly Passes Comprehensive Mental Health Bill

Emergency Nurses Association praises action on one of its legislative priorities

(July 6, 2016) – The [Emergency Nurses Association](#) today praised the U.S. House of Representatives for overwhelmingly passing comprehensive mental healthcare reform, H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act. The legislation passed on a 422-2 vote.

ENA has supported the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act as one of its top legislative priorities. The bill would make more psychiatric hospital beds available, integrate and connect physical and mental health care providers and provide resources to communities for suicide prevention. In addition, it would allow more patients to be treated in our healthcare system instead of being incarcerated, expand crisis intervention team training for law enforcement and allow families to work with doctors and mental health professionals as part of the care delivery team.

The Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act was introduced and championed by Reps. Tim Murphy (R-PA) and Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and is cosponsored by 205 bipartisan members of Congress.

"We want to thank Congressman Murphy and Congresswoman Johnson for their tremendous efforts in crafting the bill, for fighting off efforts to weaken it and for putting together a strong bipartisan coalition to ensure it passed the House," said ENA President Kathleen E. Carlson, MSN, RN, CEN, FAEN. "Mental health disorders are the leading cause of disability in the U.S., yet access to mental health care treatment is severely lacking. As a result, behavioral health patients often turn to emergency departments for care, putting added strain on emergency services and delaying treatment for the patient."

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About the Emergency Nurses Association

The Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) is the premier professional nursing association dedicated to defining the future of emergency nursing through advocacy, education, research, innovation, and leadership. Founded in 1970, ENA has proven to be an indispensable resource to the global emergency nursing community. With more than 42,000 members worldwide, ENA advocates for patient safety, develops industry-leading practice standards and guidelines, and guides emergency healthcare public policy. ENA members have expertise in triage, patient care, disaster preparedness, and all aspects of emergency care. Additional information is available at www.ena.org.