

American Psychiatric Association

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March 22, 2013

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

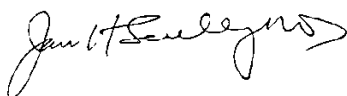
I write on behalf of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the medical specialty association representing over 33,000 psychiatric physicians and their patients, to express our support for S. 648, the Helping Educators Support All Students Act.

As you know, there are alarming facts concerning the mental health of our nation's adolescents. An estimated 11 percent of youth between 9 and 17 years old (approximately 4 million individuals) suffer from serious mental illness, and approximately 60 percent of all young people with mental illness are not getting the treatment they need. Untreated mental illness has a profound negative impact on an adolescent's life. Such impacts may include poor academic performance and attendance, and worsening conditions, such as substance use, co-occurring secondary disorders, and suicide.

Early identification of warning signs of mental illness and subsequent intervention has been shown repeatedly to improve a student's overall mental health and academic achievement, as well as to deter substance or drug use. APA applauds the Helping Educators Support All Students Act, which establishes a grant initiative for local school jurisdictions to offer early identification training to teachers and school professionals – people who interact with our adolescents on a regular and ongoing basis. Such an initiative paves the way for highly successful and evidence-based training initiatives, such as *Typical or Troubled?*, to empower more of these professionals with the knowledge of mental illness, the ability to detect warning signs, and the ability to take appropriate action in linking adolescents to the services they need.

The American Psychiatric Association applauds your efforts to improve the health and well-being of all Americans. Thank you on behalf of our members and patients.

Sincerely,



James H. Scully, Jr., M.D.
Medical Director & CEO

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