

June 19, 2013

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Chair
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary
2318 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
B-351C Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Leahy and Goodlatte and Ranking Members Grassley and Conyers:

Our diverse organizations represent law enforcement officers, judges, court personnel, corrections officers, policymakers, faith-based leaders, and mental health professionals. We come together to ask you to support S.162/H.R. 401, the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act. This bipartisan bill, introduced by Senators Al Franken (D-MN) and Congressman Richard Nugent (R-FL), is vitally important to the criminal justice and mental health fields.

Individuals with mental health conditions are significantly overrepresented in the criminal justice system. In a recent five-site study of people in U.S. jails, 14.5 percent of men and 31 percent of women had a serious mental illness—rates in excess of three to six times those found in the general population. Taken together, these numbers comprise 16.9 percent of the jail population.ⁱ About three-quarters of jail prisoners who were identified as having a mental illness also met the criteria for substance abuse or dependence.ⁱⁱ

In 2004, Congress passed the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA), which supports collaborative programs that address the needs of justice-involved individuals with mental health conditions. MIOTCRA enhances public safety by funding training for law enforcement officers on how to identify and respond to incidents involving people with mental illnesses, increasing mental health courts nationwide, improving collaboration between criminal justice and mental health systems, and improving access to effective treatment. Across the nation, the initiative supports more than 300 jurisdictions, including four dozen mental health courts and more than two dozen police departments.

The Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act reauthorizes and improves this critically important program. In addition to extending the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration program for five years, the bill provides additional resources for veterans treatment courts, increases focus on resources and training for jails and prisons, and provides innovative training at police academies. This important legislation will ensure that state and local governments can continue to design and implement sound initiatives that improve the criminal justice system, increase public safety, reduce state and local spending, and help individuals with mental illnesses.

Please support S.162/H.R.401, the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act.

Sincerely,

National

1. ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union)
2. Alkermes, Inc.
3. American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
4. American Correctional Association
5. American Jail Association
6. American Probation and Parole Association
7. American Psychological Association
8. AMVETS (American Veterans)
9. Association of State Correctional Administrators
10. CIT International Inc.
11. Corporation for Supportive Housing
12. Council of State Governments Justice Center
13. Give an Hour
14. International Community Corrections Association
15. International CURE
16. Justice Fellowship, Prison Fellowship Ministries
17. Major Cities Chiefs Association
18. Major County Sheriffs' Association
19. Mental Health America
20. National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
21. National Association of Counties
22. National Association of County Behavioral Directors
23. National Association of Drug Court Professionals
24. National Association of Police Organizations
25. National Association of Social Workers
26. National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors
27. National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
28. National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
29. National Criminal Justice Association
30. National Disability Rights Network
31. National Organization for Victim Assistance
32. National Religious Campaign Against Torture
33. National Sheriffs' Association
34. National Troopers Coalition
35. Police Foundation
36. Pretrial Justice Institute
37. Safer Foundation
38. Salvation Army
39. The Association of the United States Navy
40. The Association of Women Executives in Corrections
41. The National African American Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.
42. WestCare

Alabama

43. Alabama Department of Corrections
44. Alabama Sheriffs Association

- Arizona**
- 45. Arizona Probation & Parole Association
 - 46. David's Hope
 - 47. Western Correctional Association
- California**
- 48. California State Sheriffs' Association
 - 49. District Attorney George Gascón, City and County of San Francisco
 - 50. Healthy Minds Consulting
 - 51. Mental Health America - Orange County's
 - 52. NAMI California
 - 53. Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) - San Diego
 - 54. The Chief Probation Officers of California
- Colorado**
- 55. Mental Health America of Colorado
 - 56. NAMI Colorado
 - 57. The Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council
- Connecticut**
- 58. NAMI of Connecticut
- Washington D.C.**
- 59. Safe Streets Arts Foundation
- Florida**
- 60. Florida Association of Drug Court Professionals
 - 61. Florida Sheriffs Association
 - 62. Life Management Center of N.W. Florida, Inc.
 - 63. Manatee Glens
 - 64. NAMI FL
 - 65. NAMI Palm Beach County
 - 66. New Horizons Community Mental Health Center, Inc.
 - 67. Outpost for Hope
 - 68. Suncoast Center, Inc.
 - 69. The Florida Police Chiefs Association
 - 70. The Key Clubhouse of South Florida
- Georgia**
- 71. NAMI Georgia
- Iowa**
- 72. Friends of Iowa Women Prisoners
 - 73. Iowa State Sheriffs' and Deputies' Association
 - 74. NAMI Central Iowa
 - 75. NAMI Greater Des Moines
 - 76. NAMI IA
 - 77. Story County Sheriff Paul H. Fitzgerald
- Illinois**
- 78. Cook County Adult Probation Mental Health Unit
 - 79. Illinois Association of Problem-Solving Courts
 - 80. NAMI DeKalb, Kane-South & Kendall Counties
 - 81. NAMI of Greater Chicago
- Indiana**
- 82. Indiana Department of Corrections
 - 83. NAMI Indiana

Kansas

- 84. Johnson County, Kansas
- 85. Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt
- 86. Kansas Dept. of Corrections
- 87. Kansas Sheriffs Association
- 88. Mental Health America of the Heartland - Kansas
- 89. Sedgwick County CIT Council

Kentucky

- 90. Kentucky Dept. of Corrections
- 91. Louisville Metro Department of Corrections

Louisiana

- 92. Louisiana Drug Court Association

Massachusetts

- 93. Community Resources for Justice
- 94. Span, Inc.
- 95. Suffolk County Sheriff's Office

Maryland

- 96. Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
- 97. Montgomery County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
- 98. Montgomery County Police Department
- 99. NAMI Anne Arundel County
- 100. NAMI Carroll County
- 101. NAMI Frederick County
- 102. NAMI Harford County
- 103. NAMI Howard County
- 104. NAMI Lower Shore
- 105. NAMI Maryland
- 106. NAMI Metropolitan Baltimore
- 107. NAMI Montgomery County
- 108. NAMI Prince George's County
- 109. NAMI Southern Maryland
- 110. NAMI Washington County

Maine

- 111. Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition (M-PAC)
- 112. Portland Police Department

Michigan

- 113. Association for Children's Mental Health
- 114. Citizens for Prison Reform
- 115. Crossroads Bible Institute
- 116. Michigan Association Drug Court Professionals
- 117. Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards
- 118. Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency
- 119. Michigan Dept. of Corrections
- 120. Michigan is LifeWays Community Mental Health Authority
- 121. Sheriff Dean Roesler, Muskegon County Sheriff's Office

Mid-Atlantic (MD,NY,DC,DE, PA, NJ)

- 122. Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association

Minnesota

- 123. Anderson Professional Training Services
- 124. Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health
- 125. Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association
- 126. Minnesota County Attorneys Association
- 127. Minnesota Department of Corrections
- 128. Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association
- 129. Minnesota Psychological Association
- 130. NAMI MN
- 131. Vail Place

Missouri

- 132. Bridgeway Behavioral Health
- 133. Comprehensive Mental Health Services, Inc.
- 134. Mental Health America of the Heartland – Missouri
- 135. Missouri Sheriffs Association
- 136. NAMI Missouri
- 137. NAMI Southwest Missouri
- 138. NAMI St. Louis

Mississippi

- 139. Mississippi Department of Corrections
- 140. NAMI Vicksburg-Warren Co.
- 141. NAMI-MS

Montana

- 142. Montana Board of Pardons and Parole
- 143. NAMI Montana

Nevada

- 144. Nevada Department of Corrections

New Hampshire

- 145. Aliza Anvari, Esq., Littleton Police Dept. Prosecutor
- 146. Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center
- 147. Genesis Behavioral Health
- 148. Greater Nashua Mental Health Center at Community Council
- 149. Halls of Hope Mental Health Court
- 150. Hillsborough County
- 151. Lara J. Saffo, County Attorney, Grafton County Attorney's Office
- 152. Manchester Police Department
- 153. Mayor Donnalee Lozeau, Nashua
- 154. Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester
- 155. NAMI Manchester
- 156. NAMI Nashua
- 157. NAMI New Hampshire
- 158. New Hampshire Sheriff's Association
- 159. Shelly Golden, Grafton County Mental Health Court Coordinator
- 160. Spears Memorial Hospital

New Jersey

- 161. New Jersey Association of Correction
- 162. New jersey Association of Mental Health And Addiction Agencies
- 163. New Jersey Chapter, American Correctional Association
- 164. New Jersey Department of Corrections

- New Mexico**
165. NAMI-Westside Affiliate
166. New Mexico Department of Corrections
- New York**
167. NAMI-New York State
168. New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
169. New York State Council of Churches
- North Carolina**
170. NAMI North Carolina
- Ohio**
171. Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association
172. Clermont County Mental Health and Recovery Board
173. NAMI of Franklin County
174. Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine
175. Ohio Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence
- Oklahoma**
176. Oklahoma Dept. of Corrections
- Oregon**
177. Oregon Department of Corrections
178. The Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs
- Pennsylvania**
179. Allegheny Correctional Health Services
180. Catholic Social Services/St. Jude Tri-County PSHI
181. Cookman Beloved Community Baptist Church
182. Emerging Ministries Corporation
183. Erie County Department of Corrections
184. Have a Heart
185. Healing Communities USA
186. HPW Associates, LLC
187. Pennsylvania Prison Society
188. Venango County Office of the Public Defender
- Rhode Island**
189. Mental Health Association of Rhode Island
190. Rhode Island Department of Corrections
- South Carolina**
191. Alston Wilkes Society
192. Charleston County Mental Health Court
193. NAMI of the Pee Dee
194. Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc.
- Tennessee**
195. Major Sam Cochran, (ret.), Memphis Police Services CIT
196. University of Memphis CIT Center
- Texas**
197. Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable
198. Bexar County Juvenile Probation
199. Carole Jean Powell, Deputy Chief Public Defender, El Paso County Public Defender's Office
200. Community Education and Clinical Development
201. Correctional Counseling Inc.
202. Drug Policy Forum of Texas

- 203. Grassroots Leadership
- 204. Gulf Bend Center
- 205. Mental Health America of Greater Dallas
- 206. NAMI Dallas
- 207. NAMI Texas
- 208. Texas Association of Drug Court Professionals
- 209. Texas Council of Community Centers
- 210. The Center for Health Care Services
- Utah**
- 211. Brigham City Police
- 212. CIT Utah
- 213. Davis Behavioral Health
- 214. Office of the Salt Lake County District Attorney, Sim Gill, Salt Lake County District Attorney
- 215. Price City Police Department
- 216. Salt Lake City Police Department
- 217. Southwest Behavioral Health Center
- Virginia**
- 218. Chesterfield/Colonial Heights Community Corrections Services
- 219. Delegate Joseph R. Yost, 12th District, Virginia House of Delegates
- 220. Henrico Community Corrections Program
- 221. Leesburg Police Department
- 222. Loudoun County Sheriff
- 223. NAMI "We Care" Augusta
- 224. NAMI Norfolk
- 225. NAMI Virginia
- 226. NAMI of Central Virginia
- 227. NAMI, Mid-Tidewater Chapter
- 228. New River Valley Crisis Intervention Team/ Mental Health Association of the New River Valley
- 229. Rockbridge and Bath Regional CIT
- 230. Shannon L. Taylor, Commonwealth's Attorney for Henrico County
- 231. The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy
- 232. Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (VACLEA)
- 233. Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police
- 234. Virginia Sheriffs' Association
- Vermont**
- 235. Vermont Council of Developmental and Mental Health Services
- 236. Vermont Department of Correction
- Washington**
- 237. King County Sheriff's Office
- 238. Washington State Department of Corrections
- West Virginia**
- 239. West Virginia Division of Corrections
- Wisconsin**
- 240. Appleton Police Department WI
- 241. WCA-Wisconsin Correctional Association
- 242. Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Wyoming

243. Sheriff Danny Glick, Laramie County Sheriff's Office
244. Wyoming Department of Corrections

ⁱ Steadman, H. J., Osher, F. C., Robbins, P. C., Case, B., and Samuels, S. (2009). Prevalence of serious mental illness among jail inmates. *Psychiatric Services*, 60 (6).

ⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics