



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ADVOCACY ALERT

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR U.S. REPRESENTATIVES TODAY AND ASK THEM TO SUPPORT H.R. 1424 THE PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY ACT OF 2007

H.R. 1424 will improve access to lifesaving mental health and addiction treatment by limiting the discriminatory barriers that have kept thousands of Americans with mental health and substance use disorders from receiving the care they desperately need.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

ACTION: Urge your Members of Congress to support H.R. 1424 The Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act Of 2007, by going to <http://capwiz.com/cadca/issues/alert/?alertid=9633221&type=CO>

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

BACKGROUND: Addiction is a chronic disease, like diabetes, asthma or hypertension, and paying for its treatment yields as good a return as paying for treatment for other chronic illnesses. Providing alcohol and drug and mental health treatment services on par with services for other physical illnesses will decrease health care and other costs for employers and society by increasing productivity; reducing accidents, absenteeism, and crime; and supporting healthier parenting. H.R. 1424 will help eliminate some of the inequitable and counter-productive barriers that keep people from accessing care by:

- Requiring meaningful equity with medical and surgical benefits in provision of alcohol/drug and mental health benefits for both in- and out-of-network benefits;
- Requiring parity for benefits for treatment of the full range of substance use disorders and mental health conditions in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th. Edition (DSM-IV);
- Requiring that plans make medical necessity criteria and reasons for any denials of reimbursement available to participants and beneficiaries upon request; and
- Specifying that state laws which provide better protections remain in effect and are not preempted by this new federal law.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Gabrielle de la Gueronniere or Alexa Eggleston at Legal Action Center, (202) 544-5478. Thanks for your help!