



Higher Education Mental Health Act of 2021

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Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of Americans dealing with anxiety, stress, depression, and loneliness. Students at American colleges and universities are particularly susceptible to the mental health impacts of the pandemic. In a recent study, 68% of students seeking mental health support at a major university said the pandemic hurt their motivation or focus. Additionally, 67% said the pandemic led to feelings of loneliness or isolation. Research has shown that more than 75% of mental health conditions begin before the age of 24, but colleges and universities aren't currently equipped to meet the growing needs of their students. Before we can fully address the gap in higher ed mental health services, we must understand what challenges our students are facing and how it's impacting their mental health.

About the Legislation

The Higher Education Mental Health Act would:

- Establish a national commission to study the mental health concerns facing students at institutions of higher education
- Provide a report to Congress with information on the services available to students with mental health conditions and the current policies in place to assist students to remain in school and complete their degrees
- Create a roadmap for improving the mental health services available at American colleges and universities

Support

Active Minds, Allegany College of Maryland, American Association for Psychoanalysis, American Group Psychotherapy Association, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American Psychological Association, American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA), Anxiety and Depression Association of America, Association of Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare, Association on Higher Education and Disability, Autism Society of America, Clinical Social Work Association, Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance, Garrett College, Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice, International OCD Foundation, JED Foundation, Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance, National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, National Disability Rights Network, National League for Nursing, SMART Recovery, The Crisis Residential Association, University Of Maryland, Well Being Trust