

"COMMUNITY MENTAL WELLNESS & RESILIENCE ACT OF 2023"

A landmark bill that will fund community-led initiatives that use a public health approach to prevent and heal mental health problems caused by toxic stresses, emergencies, and disasters.

Briefing Day & Time: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 12 NOON-1:30 PM ET
[Click Here to Register for the Congressional Briefing](#)

Co-Sponsored By:

the Congressional Social Work Caucus



The International Transformational Resilience Coalition (ITRC) and co-sponsors including the Congressional Social Work Caucus, National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), National Association of Counties, National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives (NPSC), American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association, Mental Health America, National Association of Social Workers, American Public Health Association, National Rural Health Association, National Federation of Families, and others seen in the logos above are hosting an online Congressional Briefing on the need, methods, and many benefits of HR 3073, the landmark bi-partisan "Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023." Almost 1,300 people from all sectors of society from across the US registered for the first virtual Congressional Briefing on the measure held on July 20 that produced many requests for this 2nd briefing on the legislation.

When enacted this policy will, for the first time, authorize the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to fund and support community-led initiatives nationwide that use a public health approach to proactively build mental wellness and resilience to prevent and heal mental health problems generated by toxic stresses, emergencies, and disasters.

Briefing Agenda

12:00pm Welcome and overview of briefing by **Bob Doppelt, ITRC Coordinator**

12:05pm Opening Comments by **Rep. Paul Tonko (D-NY)**

12:10pm Opening Comments by **Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE)**

12:15pm Opening Comments by **Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA)**

12:20pm Background on the needs, methods, benefits, and legislative specifics of the "CMWRA of 2023" by **Bob Doppelt**

12:30pm Comments by leaders of community-led mental wellness and resilience building initiatives about how the CMWRA would benefit their programs

- **Mebane Boyd:** NC SmartStart Healthy and Resilient Communities Initiative
- **Tina Pearson:** New Hanover County Resilience Task Force
- **Beck Turner:** Community Resilience Initiative (Walla Walla WA)
- **Charlotte Eure:** Virginia's Trauma Informed Community Networks
- **Robin Saenger:** Peace4Tarpon, Tarpon Springs, FL.

12:55pm Comments from national organizational leaders about why they support the CMWRA of 2023

- **David Shern:** National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
- **Sarah Butts:** National Association of Social Workers
- **Katherine Catalano:** American Public Health Association
- **Ruben Cantu:** Prevention Institute
- **Josh Wortzel:** American Psychiatric Association

1:20pm Closing comments by **Bob Doppelt**

"COMMUNITY MENTAL WELLNESS & RESILIENCE ACT OF 2023"

[Click Here to Register for the September 21st Virtual Congressional Briefing!](#)

This briefing will be recorded and sent to everyone who registers.

Briefing Focus

This Congressional Briefing will explain why HR 3073, the "Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023" is urgently needed, what it will do, and its many benefits for communities nationwide. Original co-sponsors Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) introduced it in the House. Reps. Don Bacon (R-NE), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Mary Peltola (D-AK), Kathy Castor (D-FL), Morgan McGarvey (D-KY), Shri Thanedar (D-MI), Donald Davis (D-NY), Ann Kuster (D-NH), Troy Carter (D-LA), and Haley Stevens (D-MI) are also co-sponsors. A companion bill, S 1452, was introduced in the Senate by Sens. Ed Markey (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT). [Click here to see the legislative language of HR 3073.](#)

"The Community Mental Wellness and Resilience Act of 2023" is urgently needed because mental health problems are at epidemic levels today. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic began mental health problems were rising nationwide. According to Mental Health America, last year almost 20 percent of adults, or nearly 50 million Americans, experienced a diagnosed mental illness and 5 percent had a severe mental illness. About 8 percent had a substance use disorder, 10 percent experienced an alcohol disorder, and over 11 million adults reported serious thoughts of suicide.

In addition, a 2022 CDC survey found that overall, 37 percent of students at public and private high schools reported poor mental health, including stress, anxiety, and depression.

A poll by the American Psychiatric Association last year found that 53 percent of adults with children under 18 said they are concerned about the mental state of their children.

The historic storms, heatwaves, droughts, floods, wildfires, hazardous smoke events, and other emergencies and disasters the US is experiencing are aggravating these problems and creating new ones. In 2021 more than 40 percent of Americans lived in a county that was impacted by a major natural disaster. Disasters can traumatize 20-40 percent of those who are directly impacted, 10-20 percent of disaster response workers, and 5-10 percent of the general population who are not directly affected but know someone who is or view the events from afar. Consequently, the number of people who experience a mental health problem as a result of a disaster often outweighs those with physical injuries by 40 to 1.

Although they will remain very important, there will never be enough mental health providers to assist all of the people who experience mental health problems today, and the number of people needing assistance will only grow as more toxic stresses, emergencies, and disasters occur. Extensive research by the ITRC found that to reduce today's epidemic of mental health problems, and prevent future ones, requires the use of community-led initiatives that use a public health approach to build mental wellness and resilience among all residents for all types of toxic stresses, emergencies, and disasters.

[Read more about why HR 3073 is so urgently needed.](#)

[Click here to see the almost 150 organizations that have endorsed the legislation!](#)