

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
| **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**June 22, 2022 |

 |

|  |
| --- |
| **CONTACT** CJ Young (202) 225-5735 |

 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
| **Pallone Floor Statement on Bipartisan Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Legislation****Washington, D.C.** – *Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following remarks as prepared for delivery today on the House Floor during consideration of H.R. 7666, the Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act of 2022:*I rise today in support of H.R. 7666, the Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act of 2022.  I thank Ranking Member Rodgers for working with me these past few months to develop this comprehensive legislation that will help address the mental health and substance use disorder crises facing millions of Americans.This legislation is needed today more than ever. Americans report rising anxiety and depression and increased use of alcohol and other substances. One in five adults are battling a mental illness. Suicide is now the second-leading cause of death for children ages 10 to 14, and earlier this year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released a report finding that four in ten high school students said they felt persistently sad or hopeless during the COVID-19 pandemic. The opioid crisis also continues to devastate families and communities all around the nation – 108,000 people lost their lives due to drug overdoses last year.   The Restoring Hope for Mental Health and Well-Being Act will help restore hope for millions of Americans. The legislation strengthens and expands more than 30 critical programs that collectively support mental health care and substance use disorder prevention, care, treatment, and recovery support services in communities across the nation. As the nation prepares for the launch of the “9-8-8” National Suicide Prevention Lifeline dialing code next month, H.R. 7666 provides key crisis response efforts, establishing the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) Behavioral Health Crisis Coordination Office and requiring the development of crisis response best practices. The legislation also continues investments in critical mental health and substance use services block grant funding to states, territories, and Tribes.  The Restoring Hope Act includes crucial provisions to meet the challenges of the nation’s opioid epidemic—expanding and ensuring timely patient access to life-saving treatment for opioid use disorders through the elimination of barriers to treatment. It includes Representative Tonko’s MAT Act, which eliminates the X-waiver, a burdensome registration requirement that establishes arbitrary caps on the number of patients a provider can treat for opioid use disorder using buprenorphine.This bill also establishes a one-time, eight-hour training requirement on treating and identifying substance use disorders that providers must complete before their first registration or renewal of a license to dispense controlled substances.  H.R. 7666 also helps bolster the behavioral health workforce capacity and training. It also increases access to mental health and substance use disorder care and coverage by applying the mental health parity law to state and local government workers—such as teachers and frontline workers.  The legislation also supports the mental health of children and young people. It continues investment in the integration of behavioral health into pediatric primary care through Pediatric Mental Health Care Access grants. The bill also enhances research at the National Institutes of Health on the cognitive, physical, and socioemotional impacts of modern technology and multimedia on infants, children, and adolescents. It also addresses the needs of older youth, providing suicide prevention and other mental health support and substance use disorder services for students in higher education through the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act programs.  And it will ensure that state Medicaid programs have resources to implement and strengthen school-based mental health services, while preserving the continuity of coverage for justice-involved youth. These important provisions will increase children’s access to care. The scope and reach of this bipartisan legislation will help to support the mental health and well-being of millions of Americans, their families, and communities for years to come.  I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 7666. ﻿###  |

 |