

Statement of Representative Anna G. Eshoo
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Markup of H.R. 2646, Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2015
2123 Rayburn House Office Building
June 15, 2016

Mr. Chairman, thank you for convening this markup of H.R. 2646, the *Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2015*.

Mental health issues affect every community in our nation. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, one in five adults have had a mental health condition in the past year.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, 10 percent of our children and adolescents suffer from serious emotional and mental disorders that cause significant functional impairment in their day-to-day lives.

In Silicon Valley we're experiencing an even more desperate crisis. In a cover story expose last year, the Atlantic reported that twelve percent of high school students in Palo Alto reported having "seriously contemplated suicide in the past 12 months" and between 2010 and 2014, an average of 20 children and young adults killed themselves each year in Santa Clara County alone.

These are staggering statistics that when left untreated, cost billions of dollars and detract from quality of life of millions of Americans.

Mental illness affects over 57.7 million people a year and it's time for us to take meaningful action to reform the mental health system.

I support this legislation because it builds on what's working in the American mental health system. This includes reauthorizing the Youth Suicide Early Intervention and Prevention Strategies program and the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services on Campus program. These programs offer important and much needed preventative and treatment services for children and young adults.

Importantly, this legislation also reauthorizes the pediatric specialty loan repayment program to create incentives for doctors to go into pediatric mental health specialties. Increased access to pediatric mental health services is a critical component of a national strategy for the prevention, identification, and treatment of mental illness.

Overall, this legislation is a step in the right direction but we still have a significant journey ahead of us to completely reform our mental health system.

The best way to make strides in our mental health system is to have a continuum of robust services and resources available to those in need. We should also continue to promote successful integrated health care models in primary care and demand true parity in mental health coverage.

Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.