

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Thank you for your continued support of the Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). For almost 45 years, this program has successfully been encouraging more racial and ethnic minorities to join the behavioral health workforce and helping to improve behavioral health outcomes for racial and ethnic minorities.

Ethnic minorities make up more than 28 percent of the nation's population, yet less than 20 percent of America's behavioral health workforce consists of ethnic minorities. By 2025, minorities are projected to account for 40 percent of the U.S. population. According to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), minorities are less likely to receive diagnosis and treatment for their mental illness, have less access to and availability of mental health services and often receive a poorer quality of mental health care. Minorities can face several challenges when seeking care including racism, bias and discrimination in treatment, stigma, language barriers, and an overall lack of availability of services, as well as barriers to treatment and recovery.

Culturally competent behavioral health services are necessary to meet demand and behavioral health challenges facing communities across the United States, including the opioid epidemic. According to SAMHSA, significant behavioral health disparities persist in diverse communities across the United States. There are persistent health disparities between different racial and ethnic populations, and health equity remains a challenge with minorities receiving less mental health and addiction treatment and lower-quality care.

To meet this need, the MFP has been increasing the number of culturally competent behavioral health professionals providing mental health and substance use disorders services to underserved populations. The MFP provides support to behavioral health professionals in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, social work, nursing, marriage and family therapy, counseling and addictions.

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The bipartisan 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-146) authorized \$12,669,000 for this important program. To that end, we urge you to provide the authorized amount so that we can continue to support the only federal program that supports culturally competent mental health and substance use disorders professionals.

We are grateful for your support for the MFP and hope you can accommodate our request for FY 2019.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,



G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress

ROCKY
Hank Johnson Ga. 04

W. H. ...
Gregory ...

Ernie ...

Samuel Bishop

Maryine Waters

Blenda ...

John Beatty

Har ... NY-6

Karlan C37

Marcus ...

Shay E. ...

Bonnie ...

Oliver ...

Wade ...

Paul D. Tonko
NY-20

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FL-24

Steve Cohen

TN-09

Rob Smith

WA-09

Ben Ray Lujan

NM-03

Janny D. Davis

IL-7

Billy Zink

IL-01

Norma J. Jones

CA-35

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Grace J. Napolitano

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Raul M. Grijalva

AZ-03

Tony Cardenas

CA-29

Tulsi Gabbard

HI-02

Jimmy Gohmert

CA-34

A. J. Jones M.E. ect.

Al Jones

BM

Wm J. Clarke

Wm Lucy Clay

Barbara Lee

Ernie Swell M-7

John E. Cypers

Bob M. 11/20/04

Arthur Jackson

Tommy

Uad Deming

Al Jones

Addie Bernice Johnson

John Lawri

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Dwight Lee
PENNSYLVANIA-02

Jim DeLoach CA-52

Dwight D.
NY-10
Polk
CA-17

David Salt
GA-13

Charlie Crist
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Jim Langevin
RI-02

