



June 29th, 2020

Congressman Robert Latta (OH-05)
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
202-225-6405

Dear Congressman Latta,

I would like to express my full support of *H.R. 7147, The Creating Resources to Improve Situations of Inherent Severity Act, CRISIS Act*. As the co-chair of both the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention *Clinical Care and Intervention Task Force* and the *Crisis Services Task Force*, I have dedicated much of my career to evolving systemic solutions that meet the needs of individuals in acute mental health and substance use distress. Immediate access to crisis care is a proven, cost-effective alternative to the costly widespread use of hospital emergency departments for boarding of individuals in distress or incarceration of individuals in crisis due to minor offenses that would be more effectively resolved through treatment and supports.

I was fortunate enough to serve as a listed contributor of SAMHSA's [National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care](#) published earlier this year. The guidelines include a toolkit that creates a path to justice system diversion, lower overall cost of care, better healthcare experience for our communities and better health outcomes. The timing of the CRISIS Act is exceptional because the funding can be tied to activities that advance care that aligns with the National Guidelines published by SAMHSA in late February. This block-grant set-aside could make a difference in communities throughout the nation by supporting:

1. Consulting on structure of sustainable reimbursement strategies (rates, coding) to advance crisis care;
2. Analysis of cost and community impact of crisis care implementation;
3. Conversion of existing crisis-like services to align with the recently published SAMHSA National Guidelines; including a no-wrong-door approach to facility-based care and air-traffic control technology to improve access as well as transparency of reporting;
4. Start-up funds for crisis program development; *and*
5. Reimbursement for services delivered to individuals without adequate healthcare coverage or an ability to pay for needed crisis care.

Thank you for commitment to the well-being of our communities and thoughtful effort to invest in cost-effective approaches to strengthen this great nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W. Covington'.

David W. Covington, LPC, MBA
CEO & President

RI International
(DBA for Recovery Innovations, Inc.)
2701 N. 16th Street, Suite 316
Phoenix, AZ 85006

Work: 602-636-3084
Mobile: 404-435-8103
Email: David.Covington@riinternational.com

