

Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage

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FAIRNESS COALITION APPLAUDS SENATE INTRODUCTION OF MENTAL HEALTH PARITY BILL

WASHINGTON, DC (February 12, 2007) – The Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage representing consumers, family members, health professionals, health care systems, and administrators applaud Senators Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Michael B. Enzi (R-Wyo.) on the introduction of the Mental Health Parity Act of 2007.

The legislation would help end discrimination against people with mental and substance use disorders by requiring equal insurance coverage on par with general health insurance. It represents an agreement among employers, managed care organizations, behavioral health communities and Senate sponsors to achieve true mental health parity.

“This bill closes longstanding gaps in law that limit people’s access to needed mental health care,” said Pamela Greenberg, chair of the Fairness Coalition and president and CEO of the Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness. “Introduced after many years of advocacy, the bill would bar all discriminatory financial requirements and treatment limitations for both mental health and substance use disorders. We salute Senators Domenici, Kennedy and Enzi for their commitment to achieving equitable mental health coverage.”

“It truly is a day to celebrate when these organizations with diverse representation all express support for the same parity bill,” added Greenberg, who noted the Fairness Coalition is pleased to be a major part of the discussions about this legislation.

The Coalition strongly supports this bill and will work actively to win Senate passage.

About the Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage

The Coalition for Fairness in Mental Illness Coverage represents consumers, family members, health professionals, health care systems, and administrators. It consists of the American Hospital Association, American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association, Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness, Federation of American Hospitals, Mental Health America, National Alliance on Mental Illness and National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems.

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Mental illness coverage. It's time to be fair by treating it equally in health care.