



Strengthening the U.S. Behavioral Healthcare Workforce to Meet Increased Demand for Services

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST

The existing demand for behavioral healthcare services continues to greatly exceed the supply of qualified treatment professionals. NABH calls for legislation to require increased Medicare reimbursement rates for behavioral healthcare providers to levels that are more consistent with their education and credentialing, comparable with how reimbursement rates are set for general medical providers. This would encourage more behavioral healthcare providers to participate in the program.

NABH supports the behavioral healthcare workforce provisions included in the ***SUPPORT Act Reauthorization*** and also supports:

➤ H.R. 7619, S. 3158: *Expand the Behavioral Health Workforce Now Act*

This bill requires the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to issue guidance for states on ways to increase education, training, recruitment, and retention of mental health and substance use disorder providers under Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), particularly in rural and underserved areas.

➤ H.R. 4933, S. 462: *Mental Health Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act of 2023*

This legislation would repay up to \$250,000 in eligible student loan repayment for mental health professionals who work in mental health professional shortage areas. The bill reauthorizes through fiscal year 2032 and expands the Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Loan Repayment Program. Through this program, the Health Resources and Services Administration provides loan repayment assistance to individuals who agree to work for a period of time in the field of substance use disorder treatment.



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➤ H.R. 3355: Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Loan Repayment Program Reauthorization Act of 2023

This bill reauthorizes through fiscal year 2028 and modifies the Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery Loan Repayment Program. The program provides student loan repayment awards to eligible individuals who provide treatment and recovery support services to patients with a substance use disorder at an approved facility. This bill excludes the student loan repayment awards from income for federal tax purposes.

➤ H.R. 3760: The Mental Health Workforce Act

This bill incentivizes students at historically Black colleges and universities to pursue careers as mental health care practitioners by offering student loan forgiveness in exchange for a commitment to serving communities of color as mental health practitioners for five years after graduation.