Calling All Congressional Candidates: Take a Stand for Psychology

As Congressional candidates, we call on you to champion psychological science and access to mental and behavioral health services. By using your unique platform to support evidence-based policies, you can:

- **Save lives.** Substance abuse and suicide have been on the rise, and youth suicide rates have grown particularly concerning.
- **Ensure vulnerable patients are not overlooked.** Patients from rural and underserved communities face inequities in access to mental and behavioral health services that have serious repercussions for their entire communities.
- **Help workers cope with a changing economy.** APA’s [March 2022 Stress in America Survey](https://www.apa.org) found that financial stress is at an all-time high.
- **Unleash the power of science and data for evidence-based care.** This includes improving prevention at the community level, better targeting treatment options, educating young consumers of social media and their families, and improving science infrastructure and regulatory environment.

**Americans Want Their Elected Officials to Protect and Strengthen Mental Health**

87 percent of Americans think mental health is as important as physical health. Yet the mental and behavioral health services infrastructure is lacking. There is a shortage of mental health professionals, and the current infrastructure remains geared towards adults despite a demonstrated increased need for mental health access among the nation’s youth. Americans need leadership from Congress on mental and behavioral health.

**Join a Bipartisan Team of Champions**

Psychological science and mental and behavioral health issues are not partisan, and the need for action is pressing. Over the past few years, we have seen surges in emergency department visits due to mental health issues, suicide attempts, and drug overdoses. Communities of color, rural communities, children and adolescents, and LGBTQ+ individuals are disproportionately affected. Rates of eating disorders, sleep disruptions, and alcohol consumption also continue to increase. We need to address these issues on the ground and invest in research to better understand their causes and develop stronger approaches. It is imperative that Congressional candidates reach across the aisle to work on these issues in a bipartisan manner.

**Please reach out to the American Psychological Association (APA) Services to learn about bipartisan policy proposals to:**

- Ensure access for evidence-based health and behavioral health services, including promoting health equity for underserved communities.
- Fund psychological research and extend its application in public / private sectors.
- Improve access to graduate study for psychology and train the next generation of culturally competent, diverse psychologists.
- Use psychological science to improve education disparities, suicide and interpersonal violence, address substance abuse disorders and combat discrimination.
- Protect and strengthen safety net programs.