

HJM 13

Support the Federal Social Work Reinvestment Act: Social Work and Mental Health

The Federal Social Work Reinvestment Act provides a comprehensive analysis of current trends within the academic and professional social work communities. Specifically, SWR Act will develop long-term recommendations and strategies to maximize the ability of America's social workers to serve their clients with expertise and care. The recommendations will be presented to Congress and the Executive Branch. Areas of Focus: Fair market compensation, high educational debt, social work workforce trends, knowledge development, social work safety, and state level social work licensure and the impact these issues have on the areas of aging, child welfare, military and veterans affairs, mental and behavioral health and disability, criminal justice, and health.

Our nation is experiencing a crisis in mental health treatment and service delivery.

The statistics are stark:

- More than one in four Americans suffers from a diagnosable mental health problem
- At least 14% of Americans suffers from a moderate to severe mental illness
- Less than half of those experiencing mental health problems receive appropriate treatment

The need for high-quality mental health services is greatest for the most vulnerable members of our communities:

- More than one in five American children experiences a significant mental health problem
- Rural areas are drastically underserved in the area of mental health: more than 85% of the 1,669 federally designated mental health professional shortage areas are rural

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Social workers provide over 50% of mental health services in America today. Through reinvesting in the social work profession, we can improve quality and access to mental health treatment for all. To address the looming workforce crisis in social work, NASW Oregon is introducing a Joint Memorial (HJM 13) urging the Oregon Delegation, Congress, and the Administration to pass the Dorothy I. Height/Whitney M. Young Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act.

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