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The Honorable Tim Murphy
United States House of Representatives
2332 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Murphy:

I write to commend you for your leadership on mental health and substance abuse issues. I also wish to express my strong support for H.R. 3717, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act.

This legislation promotes the integration of mental health and substance abuse programs within the healthcare delivery systems of our nation's many communities. It would eliminate many barriers to necessary care and help remove the stigma on mental health and substance abuse disorders.

As revealed by your recent investigation into our nation's mental health system, substance abuse is a major problem in the United States. Not only does it damage one's ability to live a normal life, it also increases the incidents of infectious diseases such as HIV, hepatitis, and tuberculosis. In light of this, Temple's Center for Substance Abuse and Research is committed to finding the root basis of drug addiction, and finding ways to prevent, treat, and ameliorate its harsh consequences.

I believe that the findings of the Energy and Commerce subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, as reflected in H.R. 3717, merit the consideration and support of your Congressional colleagues. I look forward to working in partnership with Congress, the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, and our community partners to advance the goals of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Unterwald, PhD
Director, Center for Substance Abuse Research
Professor of Pharmacology