

December 4, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the nearly 60 undersigned organizations and the millions of dedicated physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and health care professionals across the country who have benefited from the vital support offered through the initial authorization of the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act of 2022 (“Lorna Breen Act” or “Act”), we strongly urge you to swiftly consider and pass the bipartisan Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Reauthorization Act (H.R. 7153/S. 3679). Led by Representatives Susan Wild (D-PA), Buddy Carter (R-GA), Debbie Dingell (D-MI), and Jen Kiggans (R-VA), and Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Todd Young (R-IN), both the House and Senate versions of this important reauthorization effort were marked-up and reported out of committee earlier this spring with overwhelming bipartisan support. We ask for your leadership in ensuring this much-needed program is reauthorized prior to the close of the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, either as a stand-alone measure or as part of any legislative package.

The Lorna Breen Act was originally enacted on March 18, 2022, and is the first and only federal law dedicated to preventing suicide and reducing occupational burnout, mental health conditions, and stress for health care professionals. It is named in honor of the life, memory, and legacy of Dr. Lorna Breen, an emergency physician who died by suicide on April 26, 2020. Dr. Breen was a sister, a daughter, a friend, a colleague, and a caregiver who was deeply dedicated to her patients. The law that carries her name was a critical first step in acknowledging and addressing the pervasive stigma and challenges – such as fear of loss of licensure or credentialing – that often prevent health care professionals from seeking the mental health services they need, causing them to suffer in silence.

**Because of the Lorna Breen Act, lives have been saved and livelihoods have been protected.** Access to mental and behavioral health support and treatment has improved and more health care employers are able to engage with their health care professional workforce on these issues, provide greater resources, and accelerate promising solutions. Thanks to continued advocacy work, several state licensure boards, hospitals, and health systems have also started to implement overdue changes in licensing and credentialing processes that have unintentionally contributed to the stigma associated with seeking mental health care.

But there is still much work to be done. The Lorna Breen Act has made this progress possible, but the need for the law is as great as ever. Health care professionals still face higher and increasing rates of mental health and behavioral health conditions, occupational burnout, and suicide than other professions. These factors are only worsening existing provider shortages and negatively affecting patient care, as experienced health care professionals leave the workforce in greater numbers and recruitment and retention of future generations becomes more and more difficult. We must continue to prioritize the health and well-being of those who care for us, ensuring an environment where each and every health care professional always has access to the necessary mental health care services they need and deserve, without fear of loss of licensure, loss of income, or threat of other meaningful career setbacks associated with the stigma of getting the help they need.

The Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Reauthorization Act will help ensure that hospitals, health systems, and other health care organizations can continue, expand, and build on the successes seen with numerous initiatives funded by the Act. Moreover, the reauthorization measure importantly expands grants and contracts eligibility to include entities that have “a focus on the reduction of administrative burden on health care workers.” This will enable health care organizations to address system-level risk factors that lead to occupational burnout, contribute to mental health conditions, and cause intensive stress and strain. Excessive administrative burden and workflow inefficiencies overload already stretched-thin health care professionals and such pressures can compromise patient care and interfere with the patient-clinician relationship. When health care professionals have the care they need and deserve they are able to continue to provide high quality care to the individuals, families, and communities they serve.

Once again, we respectfully ask for your leadership to ensure the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act is reauthorized before the end of the year. We are grateful for your continued commitment to the physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and all health care professionals who continue to serve our communities every day. When we support the individuals who comprise our nation’s health care workforce, we ensure that patients have optimal care and that our health care system can thrive. Please know we stand ready to work with you and your colleagues to help secure enactment of the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Reauthorization Act before the end of the session.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Critical-Care Nurses  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons  
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons  
American College of Cardiology  
American College of Emergency Physicians  
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Radiology

American College of Rheumatology  
American College of Surgeons  
American Dental Association  
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention  
American Medical Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association Services  
American Society for Radiation Oncology  
American Society of Anesthesiologists  
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery  
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists  
American Society of Transplant Surgeons  
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association  
American Urological Association  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
AMGA  
Association for Clinical Oncology  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Caregiver Action Network  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Corporate Counseling Associates  
Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation  
Emergency Nurses Association  
FIGS  
Intealth  
Johnson & Johnson  
Moral Injury of Healthcare  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners  
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors  
National Consumers League  
National Hispanic Health Foundation  
National Hispanic Medical Association  
National League for Nursing  
National Minority Quality Forum  
PBI Education  
Renal Physicians Association  
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions  
Society for Vascular Surgery  
Society of Gynecologic Oncology  
Sutter Health  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons

cc: The Honorable John Thune, Senate Republican Whip  
The Honorable Steve Scalise, House Majority Leader  
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Chair, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, House Energy and Commerce Committee  
The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee  
The Honorable Bill Cassidy, MD, Ranking Member, Senate Health, Education, Labor, and  
Pensions Committee