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APA Joins Rally for Mental Health Legislation

Urges Lawmakers to Pass Bill Before Adjourning

Arlington, Va. – With only a short time left for Congress to finish 2008 legislative business, the American Psychiatric Association joined key congressional leaders to further press for swift passage of legislation that would bring equal coverage to mental health and substance abuse treatment in commercial health insurance plans.

Passage of the House and Senate mental health parity compromise language would end years of discriminatory insurance coverage of treatment for mental illnesses and would improve coverage for over 113 million Americans.

The bill provides strong federal protections for mental health care, including substance use disorder services, and requires that treatment limitations and cost-sharing requirements be equal to those that apply to other medical services. Benefit restrictions such as day and visit maximums, copays, deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums and coinsurance all must be covered equally with medical and surgical care.

This historic bipartisan and bicameral agreement on mental health parity legislation includes significant and necessary changes. The American Psychiatric Association is urging all members of the mental health community to send the message that Congress should not adjourn without passing this crucial legislation.

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About the American Psychiatric Association:

The American Psychiatric Association is the nation's leading medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at www.psych.org and www.HealthyMinds.org