

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2021

Secretary Janet Yellen  
Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 3134  
Washington, DC 20220

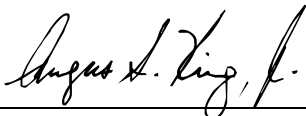
Dear Secretary Yellen:

The coronavirus pandemic has inflicted terrible damage on the mental health of many Americans and has exacerbated substance use disorder issues that touch many families across the country. State and local governments are on the front lines of supporting citizens' mental and behavioral health and of providing addiction services during this period of increased need. As you develop regulations and guidance detailing permissible uses of the state and local funding that Congress provided under Section 9901 of H.R. 1319, we urge you to include specific language allowing the use of those funds for mental health and substance use disorder services.

Nearly one in five adults in the United States live with a mental illness, which was equivalent to 46.6 million Americans in 2017, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH). During the COVID-19 pandemic, increased isolation and reduced access to treatment programs have contributed to the fact that drug overdoses have risen by roughly 18 percent when comparing the weeks prior to and following the commencement of state-mandated stay-at-home orders. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the estimated total cost to the economy of prescription opioid misuse alone is \$78,500,000,000 annually, and includes the cost of healthcare, lost productivity, and involvement of the criminal justice system.

We recognize that H.R. 1319 generally allows state and local governments to use funding provided under Section 9901 to "respond to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits." By enumerating the provision of mental health and substance use disorder services as a permissible use of funds under this general grant of congressional authority, the Department of the Treasury will support the current and future wellbeing of citizens across the United States and avoid a secondary public health crisis. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



---

ANGUS S. KING, JR.  
United States Senator



---

Todd Young  
United States Senator



---

Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator



---

Roger Marshall, M.D.  
United States Senator



---

Mark Kelly  
United States Senator