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March 12, 2020

The Honorable Rep. Rose DeLauro
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, Human,
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rep. Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, Human,
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

As President of the Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors (AUCCCD), I am writing to you today in light of how the current COVID-19 pandemic is impacting the ability of colleges and universities to serve the mental health needs of college students. In order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, many colleges have moved to distance learning as an avenue for students to continue their academic studies. However, this move means that many college counseling centers will utilize telemental health services in order to provide much needed psychological care to already vulnerable students who are likely experiencing increased anxiety and social isolation. This includes students who live in another state rather than where their college is located. In most states, mental health professionals are prohibited from practicing across state lines.

AUCCCD is reaching out to you as members of Congress because your august body has long recognized that the demand and need for mental health services on our college campuses has far exceeded the available resources. AUCCCD has been proud to support past and current legislation that has a direct impact on the mental health and well-being of college students such as the Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Memorial Act (suicide prevention), the Higher Education Act, Mental Health on Campus Improvement Act, Improving Mental Health Access for Students Act, and Threat Assessment, Prevention, and Safety Act.

During this time of crisis, I ask that you support college student mental health in the following ways:

- **Pass emergency legislation that would permit college student mental health and medical professionals involved in student mental health care to practice across state lines for a period of 6 months.**
- **Support funding for colleges and universities who do not have access to a HIPAA compliant telehealth platform.**
- **Support funding for telemental health training for counseling center staff.**

To advance the mission of higher education, AUCCCD innovates, educates and advocates for collegiate mental health. Please help us fulfill this mission.

Sincerely,

Sharon L. Mitchell, Ph.D.

President, AUCCCD

Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors

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