

March 27, 2003

To: Parity Supporters

From: Peter Newbould, MHLG Health Policy Committee Cochair
Chris Koyanagi, MHLG Health Policy Committee Cochair

Re: **SENATE HEALTH COMMITTEE** (Parity Alert #22)

Action: Supporters of the “Paul Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act” ([S. 486/H.R. 953](#)) who are represented by Senators on the Health Committee (<http://health.senate.gov/>) should contact their Senator.

Option 1:

Telephone your Senator at his or her state office. Those numbers are listed below.

Option 2:

Or write a letter to Senator – see samples below.

Message:

To Non-Cosponsoring Senators: “I’m calling to urge the Senator to contact Chairman Gregg and ask that a markup be scheduled immediately on S. 486, the Domenici-Kennedy mental health parity bill. It’s vital to pass this legislation to ban insurance discrimination against people with mental health disorders.” [*Pronounced “doe MEN uh chee”*]

To Cosponsors: “I’m calling to urge the Senator to contact Chairman Gregg and ask that a markup be scheduled immediately on S. 486, the Domenici-Kennedy mental health parity bill. As a cosponsor, the Senator knows that it’s vital to pass this legislation to ban insurance discrimination against people with mental health disorders.”

Targets:

Non-Cosponsors of S. 486

Alabama: Jeff Sessions (R) 251-265-9507
Missouri: Christopher Bond (R) 573-634-2488
Nevada: John Ensign (R) 702-388-6605
New Hampshire: Judd Gregg (R), Chairman 603-225-7115
Tennessee: Lamar Alexander (R) 615-736-5129
and Bill Frist (R) 615-352-9411
Wyoming: Mike Enzi (R) 307-682-6268

Cosponsors of S. 486

Connecticut: Christopher Dodd (D) 1-800-334-5341 toll-free in CT
Iowa: Tom Harkin (D) 515-284-4574
Kansas: Pat Roberts (R) 913-648-3103
Maryland: Barbara Mikulski (D) 410-962-4510
Massachusetts: Edward Kennedy (D), Ranking Member 617-565-3170
New Mexico: Jeff Bingaman (D) 505-346-6601
New York: Hillary Clinton (D) 212-688-6262

North Carolina: John Edwards (D) 919-856-4245
Ohio: Mike DeWine (R) 614-469-5186
Rhode Island: Jack Reed (D) 1-800-284-4200 toll-free in RI
South Carolina: Lindsey Graham (R) 864-250-1417
Vermont: James Jeffords (I) 802-223-5273
Virginia: John Warner (R) 804-771-2579
Washington: Patty Murray (D) 206-553-5545

Sample Senate Letter:

The Honorable (full name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (last name):

I am writing to urge you to ask Chairman Judd Gregg to schedule an immediate Health Committee markup of S. 486, the “Paul Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act.” Additionally I [thank you for cosponsoring // urge you to cosponsor] this bill by Senators Pete Domenici and Edward Kennedy.

This bipartisan legislation would take great strides in ending the use of arbitrary, one-size-fits-all limits on mental health benefits that are different from limits on other medical and surgical benefits. Passage of S. 486 can make a real difference for patients who now face higher coinsurance and arbitrary limits on the days of care that can help them with their mental disorder. As your Committee considers S. 486 it is important that the bill continue to apply to all mental disorders for which treatment is medically necessary, just as the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program does.

With over 50 Senators, over 200 House members and 250 national organizations supporting full mental health parity, it is obvious that this much-needed legislation is long overdue. President Bush echoed this sentiment last April when he urged Congress to pass parity legislation. I appreciate your consideration of my concerns and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,