



## Federal Legislation that Addresses Workforce Shortages and Insurance Parity

### **H.R. 4933/S. 462, *Mental Health Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act of 2023***

- Introduced by Reps. Grace Napolitano (D-CA) and Annie Kuster (D-NH) in the House and Sens. Tina Smith (D-MN) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) in the Senate
- Works to build a robust mental and behavioral health workforce by extending a loan repayment program to mental health professionals who work for a period in a federally designated mental health professional shortage area.
- This legislation would:
  - Allow for eligible student loans to be repaid for education in mental health or a related field leading to a master's degree, doctoral degree, or post-doctoral study for any individual who serves as a mental health provider in a mental health professional shortage area for up to six years.

### **H.R. 2412, *Helping Kids Cope Act***

- Introduced by Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE).
- Authorizes three new grant programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration to increase national capacity to provide pediatric behavioral health services.
- This legislation would:
  - Integrate pediatric behavioral health care across a wide range of child-facing systems/settings of care;
  - Recruit and retain a diverse, evidence-informed pediatric mental health workforce; and
  - Expand or improve upon facility capacity to provide behavioral health services.

AACAP urges a companion bill for H.R. 2412, Helping Kids Cope Act be introduced on the Senate.

### **S. 923, *Better Mental Health Care for Americans Act***

- Introduced by Sens. Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Ron Wyden (D-OR).
- Aims to bridge the gap in access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment by requiring parity in Medicare Advantage, Medicare Part D, and Medicaid and increase access to behavioral healthcare in Medicaid by supporting integration of behavioral health and primary care.
- This legislation would:
  - Require parity for mental and behavioral health services in Medicare Advantage, Medicare Part D, and Medicaid;
  - Encourage mental and behavioral health integration with physical care by increasing reimbursement rates for Medicare and Medicaid;
  - Establish a demonstration project to increase access to integrated mental and behavioral health care for children across different setting, like schools; and
  - Increase accountability and oversight of integrated mental and behavioral health care under Medicare, Medicaid, and private health insurance plans.

AACAP urges a companion bill for S. 923, Better Mental Health Care for Americans Act be introduced on the House.