

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

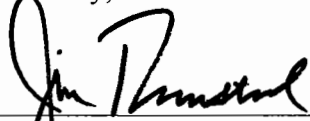
The first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, the fifth anniversary of 9/11, and the ongoing combat in Iraq and Afghanistan are reminders of the prevalence of traumatic events in contemporary society. It has become more clear than ever that psychological trauma is a primary—but often ignored or overlooked—factor of health (both physical and mental) with which survivors of violent crime, abuse, disaster, terrorism, and war must contend, and this presents a public health crisis in the United States that needs to be addressed immediately.

As you prepare your budget request for Fiscal Year 2008, we strongly urge you to include \$1.5 million to fund a public education and awareness campaign to help foster a better public understanding of trauma and how it is interrelated with unhealthy ways of coping (e.g. substance abuse, self injury, eating disorders, violence perpetration, and more). The economic costs of untreated trauma-related alcohol and drug abuse alone were estimated at \$160.7 billion in 2000.¹ For child abuse survivors alone, long-term psychiatric and medical health care costs are estimated at another \$100 billion per year.² A public education and awareness campaign is a necessary, and cost-effective, first step to help alleviate this crisis.

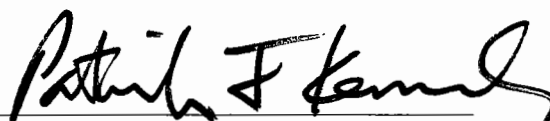
It is widely acknowledged that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services, is the most experienced and best prepared arm of your Administration to carry out this campaign and ask that you budget these funds expressly and accordingly.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that all Americans receive the support they need in the aftermath of traumatic experiences. Doing so will not only help our nation's suffering men, women, and children to heal and save billions of taxpayer dollars in the long run, but it will also play a central role in preventing crime/violence and substance abuse for generations to come. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,



Jim Ramstad
Co-Chair
Addiction Treatment & Recover Caucus



Patrick J. Kennedy
Co-Chair
Addiction Treatment & Recover Caucus

¹ The Economic Costs of Drug Abuse in the United States 1992-1998. Report prepared by The Lewin Group.

² The Ross Institute (www.rossinst.com)

Bill Delahunt

William D. Delahunt
Member of Congress

Michael R. McNulty

Michael R. McNulty
Member of Congress

Carolyn McCarthy

Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress

Leonard L. Boswell

Leonard L. Boswell
Member of Congress

Ben Cardin

Benjamin L. Cardin
Member of Congress

Jim McDermott

Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

Pete Stark

Fortney Pete Stark
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Charles B. Rangel

Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

James L. Oberstar

James L. Oberstar
Member of Congress

Luis V. Gutierrez

Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress

Cc: The Hon. Rob Portman, Director, Office of Management and Budget