



February 4, 2014

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso  
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden and Senator Barrasso:

AARP is pleased to endorse the bipartisan Seniors Mental Health Access Improvement Act (S. 562). Your legislation would provide for coverage of mental health counselor and marriage and family therapist services under Medicare Part B. Increasing access to mental health services is especially important as mental and behavioral health issues are becoming an increasing problem for older Americans – a problem that will only escalate further as the population ages.

Nearly one in five older adults in this country has one or more mental health or substance abuse conditions. This population is inadequately served by our health care system. AARP supports expanding the list of covered providers who can deliver these needed services and adequate reimbursement for mental health and substance abuse services. S. 562 will improve older Americans' access to licensed mental health professionals.

AARP appreciates your bipartisan leadership to help improve mental health services for seniors. We look forward to working with you on this and other issues important to older Americans. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or have your staff contact Ariel Gonzalez on our Government Affairs staff at (202) 434-3770 or at [agonzalez@aarp.org](mailto:agonzalez@aarp.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joyce A. Rogers'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joyce A. Rogers  
Senior Vice President  
Government Affairs