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September 29, 2014

The Honorable Christopher Gibson
1708 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Thompson
231 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gibson and Representative Thompson:

AARP is pleased to endorse the bipartisan Mental Health Access Improvement Act (H.R. 3662). 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. H.R. 3662 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.

Sincerely,

Joyce A. Rogers
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs

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