

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 17, 2025

Dear Chair Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you craft the Fiscal Year 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and related Agencies appropriations bill, the undersigned Members urge you to maintain funding for the 988 LGBTQ+ Youth Specialized Services within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Budget.

In 2022, SAMHSA launched the LGBTQ+ youth specialized services as a pilot program in coordination with the broader 988 lifeline. Since its launch, the line has received nearly 1.5 million contacts from LGBTQ+ youth through calls, texts, and online chats<sup>1</sup>. In 2024 alone the LGBTQ+ service served over 600,000 crisis contacts, demonstrating both its necessity and impact<sup>2</sup>.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among youth aged 10 to 14, and LGBTQ+ young people are four times more likely to attempt suicide than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. It is estimated that one LGBTQ+ young person attempts suicide every 45 seconds<sup>3</sup>.

The LGBTQ+ Youth lifeline was designed to address this higher risk of suicide for this population. When an adolescent reaches out to the LGBTQ+ Youth lifeline, they can access specialized services from somebody who cares, who may have shared experience, understands where they are coming from, and is trained to address the unique situation LGBTQ+ youth may face<sup>4</sup>.

LGBTQ+ identifying youth can face distinct mental health issues rooted in rejection and social discrimination. In fact, of LGBTQ+ youth who reported they slept away from parents or were

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.npr.org/sections/shots-health-news/2025/06/18/nx-s1-5438405/lgbtq-988-lifeline-samhsa-hhs#:~:text=%22Just%20last%20year%20alone%2C%20approximately,get%20the%20help%20they%20need.%22>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cwyqlv7y31go>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/article/facts-about-lgbtq-youth-suicide/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nami.org/nami-news/nami-reacts-to-elimination-of-lgbtq-youth-specialized-services-in-988/>

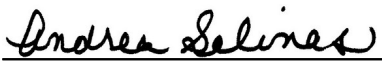
kicked out of the house, 40 percent were abandoned due to their identity and 28 percent of LGBTQ+ youth report experiencing homelessness or housing instability during their lives<sup>5</sup>.

Despite the need, a 2024 study demonstrated that 50 percent of LGBTQ+ youth who wanted mental health care in the previous year were unable to access it<sup>6</sup>. More than 80 percent say it is important that crisis services include a specific focus on LGBTQ+ youth<sup>7</sup>.

In the midst of a youth mental health crisis, we cannot afford to eliminate a critical, life-saving resource for LGBTQ+ youth, who face both higher risks and greater barriers to care. These young people deserve to speak with professionals who are trained and equipped to meet their unique needs.

Please maintain the lifesaving funding for the 988 LGBTQ+ youth specialized services so we can continue to serve LGBTQ+ young people across the country who are at an elevated risk of suicide and mental illness.

Sincerely,



Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress

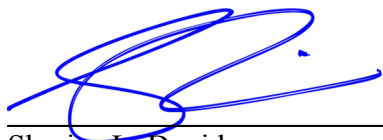


Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

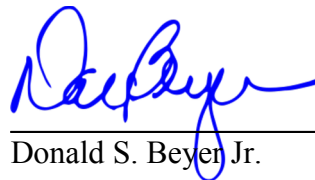
<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/homelessness-and-housing-instability-among-lgbtq-youth-feb-2022/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2024/>

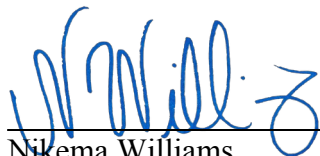
<sup>7</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2021/?section=FindingSupport>



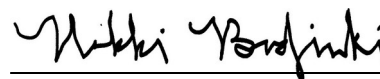
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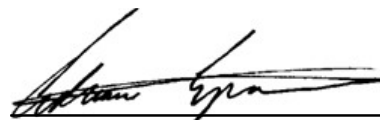
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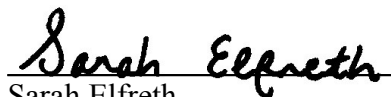
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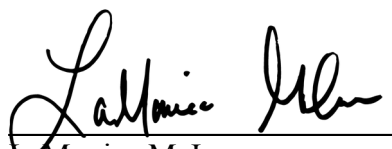
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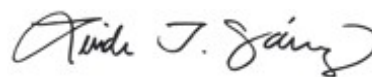
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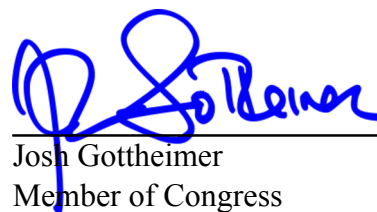
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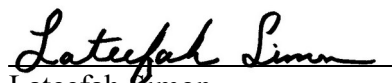
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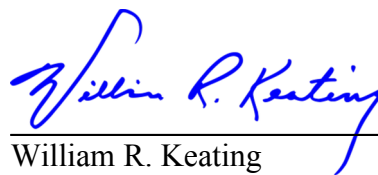
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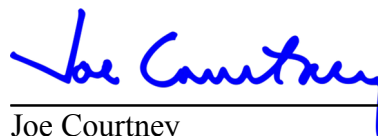
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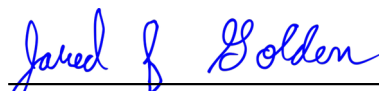
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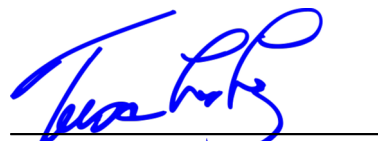
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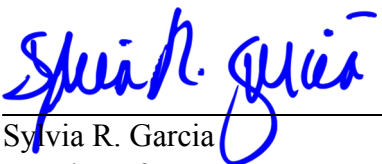
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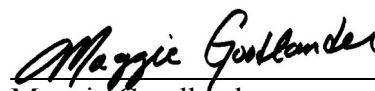
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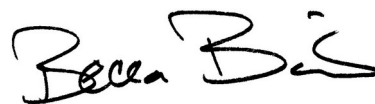
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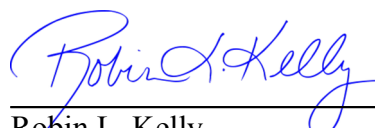
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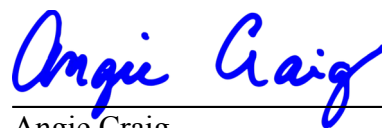
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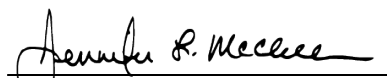
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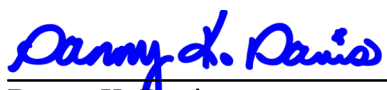
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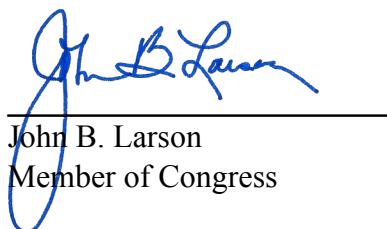
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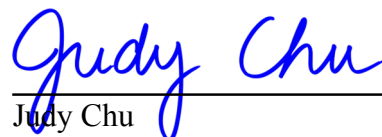
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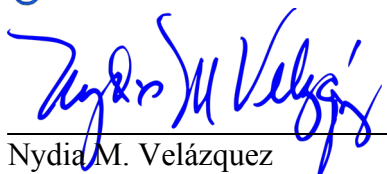
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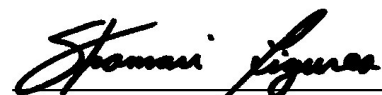
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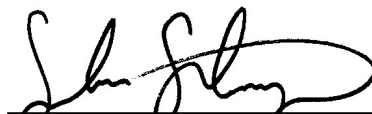
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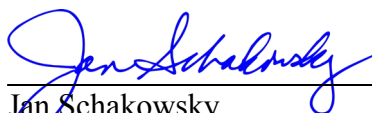
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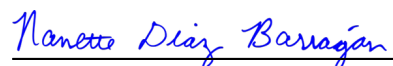


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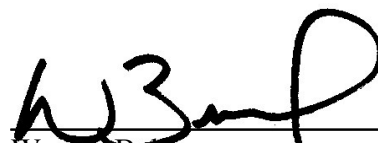
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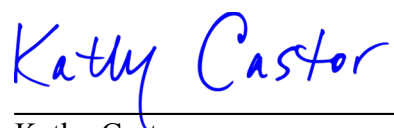
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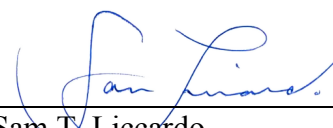
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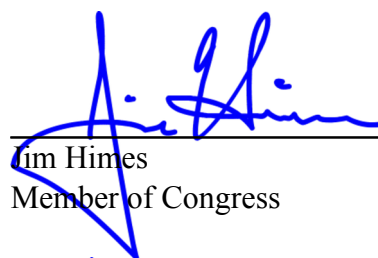
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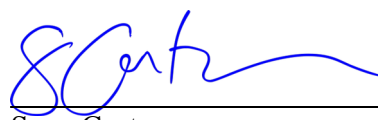
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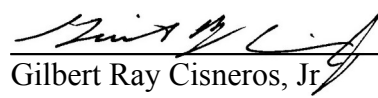
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Sean Casten  
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John Garamendi  
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Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
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Sara Jacobs  
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