

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 26, 2022

Chair Rosa DeLauro  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C.

Ranking Member Kay Granger  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

Thank you for your leadership and work to secure funding for crisis response teams in fiscal year 2022. As you work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we write to request an increase in funding to encourage the creation and expansion of alternative crisis response teams to \$100 million.

In the explanatory statement for the FY 2022 Appropriations Omnibus, Congress included language supporting \$10 million for emergency response teams that divert mental health crisis calls from law enforcement to behavioral health teams. Encouraging the use of behavioral health professionals to respond to mental health crisis situations improves the quality of crisis response and strengthens public safety by providing long term solutions to mental health and substance use issues. That is why we strongly encourage higher funding levels.

These initiatives have a demonstrated track record of not only providing more appropriate care to meet the needs of communities, but also reducing unnecessary interactions between police and community members. The overwhelming majority of 911 calls involve mental health and substance use incidents, neighbor disputes, nuisance complaints, and requests for wellness checks that require appropriately trained, unarmed behavioral health professionals. Both the police and policing reform advocates often assert that specialized service providers—such as social workers, paramedics, and peer support counselors—are better equipped to handle such situations than armed officers.

For some local governments, however, establishing and growing crisis response teams is cost prohibitive given the resources it takes to cover training, personnel, and equipment. Additional federal funding could go a long way in offsetting costs and spurring growth of these programs across the country. Crisis response teams are important components of building up comprehensive crisis care infrastructure as outlined by SAMHSA’s National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care, which emphasizes a no-wrong-door integrated crisis system that directs people to care wherever they are introduced to the system.

It is critical that we make investments in public safety programs that center mental health care and work to resolve the underlying conditions of so many emergency calls—homelessness, substance use, and other chronic health issues. Existing 911 response limited to police, fire, or EMT services have been overwhelmed and simply do not meet the needs of the communities they serve. A focus on a holistic public safety approach centered on the needs of communities is long overdue.

We urge you to include \$100 million in funding for crisis response teams in the FY 2023 appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



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Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



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Cori Bush  
Member of Congress



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Dean Phillips  
Member of Congress



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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



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Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



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Karen Bass  
Member of Congress



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Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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A. Donald McEachin  
Member of Congress



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Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress



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Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



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Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress



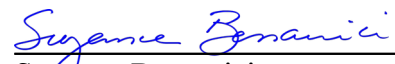
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Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



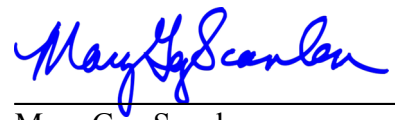
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Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



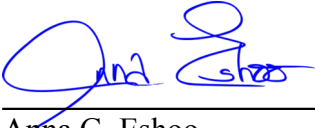
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Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



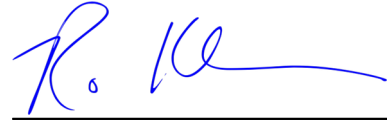
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Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



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Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress



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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



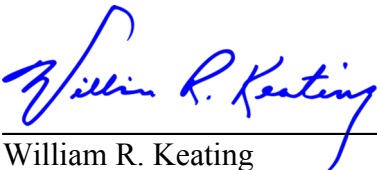
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Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



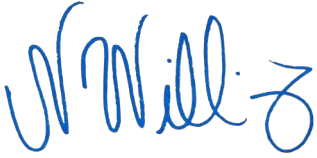
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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



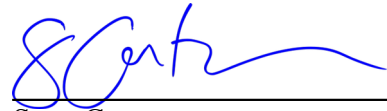
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Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



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Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



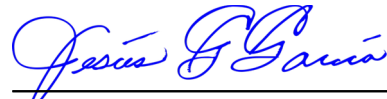
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Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



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Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



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Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



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Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress