

118TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. RES. 1251

Honoring Rosalynn Smith Carter's legacy in mental health advocacy.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 22, 2024

Mr. CARTER of Georgia (for himself and Mrs. DINGELL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

RESOLUTION

Honoring Rosalynn Smith Carter's legacy in mental health advocacy.

Whereas May 2024 is Mental Health Awareness Month;

Whereas Rosalynn Smith Carter, since 1970, when her husband, future President of the United States Jimmy Carter, was a candidate for Governor of Georgia, was a leading advocate for raising awareness about mental health and substance use disorder;

Whereas Mrs. Carter emerged as a national driving force for mental health when, during Jimmy Carter's Presidential administration, Mrs. Carter became the active honorary chair of the President's Commission on Mental Health;

Whereas the work of President Carter's Commission on Mental Health resulted in passage of the Mental Health Sys-

tems Act of 1980, which offered reforms to publicly funded mental health programs;

Whereas, in 1982, President and Mrs. Carter founded The Carter Center, which is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people in the United States and in the developing world through programs waging peace, fighting disease, and building hope;

Whereas, from 1985 to 2016, Mrs. Carter hosted the annual Rosalynn Carter Symposium on Mental Health Policy, bringing together national leaders in the mental health community to discuss a specific topic each year, including promoting access to appropriate and affordable behavioral health care services, improving the quality of such services, and reducing the stigma and isolation associated with mental health disorders and substance use disorder;

Whereas the Carter Center's Mental Health Program, established in 1990, under the leadership and guidance of Mrs. Carter, continues to build consensus in order to effect positive change in mental health and substance use policy and systems, with a focus on vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, and those who care for individuals with mental health disorders or substance use disorder.

Whereas, in 1996, Mrs. Carter established the Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism, which have provided training and support to more than 260 journalists in the United States and abroad to report accurately and sensitively about and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health disorders, mental health care, mental health law and policy, and related issues;

Whereas Mrs. Carter, in 2008, played a key role in supporting the passage of the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, which helps ensure that mental health disorders and substance use disorders are covered by insurance at parity with other illnesses;

Whereas throughout Mrs. Carter's 50 plus years of advocacy for mental health, she has been an effective champion for rights of persons with mental illness and substance use disorders, the inclusion of persons with lived experience in the crafting of policy, and the elimination of stigma and discrimination against people with mental health disorders, which are among the most common health conditions around the world;

Whereas Mrs. Carter believed that solutions are truly within our reach to overcome stigma, provide mental health advocacy and substance use prevention programming in all communities, and make treatment and support available to all, including the people who care for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders, allowing every individual the chance to create a happy and fulfilling future; and

Whereas, after her passing on November 19, 2023, The Carter Center continues to carry forward her legacy to continue to decrease stigma and discrimination against individuals with mental health and substance use disorders, increase mental health advocacy and substance use prevention, and improve access to treatment and supports for all such individuals and those who care for such individuals in the United States and around the world: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

1 (1) hereby expresses its profound gratitude, on
2 behalf of the people of the United States, to
3 Rosalynn Smith Carter for her lifetime of accom-
4 plishments and commitment on behalf of those af-
5 fected by mental health disorders and substance use
6 disorders;

7 (2) recognizes, praises, and appreciates the im-
8 provements in well-being and the betterment of soci-
9 ety Mrs. Carter's contributions generated;

10 (3) recognizes The Carter Center for its leader-
11 ship and for its continued work to carry forward the
12 legacy of Rosalynn Smith Carter in advocating for
13 mental health for all; and

14 (4) encourages all people of the United States
15 to follow Mrs. Carter's example of putting compas-
16 sion into action through a lifetime of service to hu-
17 manity.

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