



EDC Passes Monumental Legislation in Congress' End-of-Year Package, Including the Anna Westin Legacy Act and Up to \$8M in Funding for Research and Early Identification Trainings

WASHINGTON D.C. (December 23, 2022) – Today, the Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC) is pleased to announce that the **Anna Westin Legacy Act** ([S. 3686/H.R. 7249](#)), and **funding for eating disorders research and training** passed in Congress's end-of-year package. The package now awaits President Biden's signature, the final step before becoming law.

The EDC extends immense gratitude to several Members of Congress:

(1) **Senate and House champions of the Anna Westin Legacy Act:** Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), and Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Representatives Doris Matsui (D-CA-06), David McKinley (R-WV-01), Ted Deutch (D-FL-22), and Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ-02).

With its passage, the Anna Westin Legacy Act will reauthorize and expand the work of the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders as a competing continuation. With funding at \$5 million over 5 years, the Anna Westin Legacy Act will provide for continued training of primary health care professionals on eating disorders screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT). The legislation will also expand the SBIRT model to help providers screen and refer children and at-risk communities, including people of color, men and boys, military families, veterans, and LGBTQ+ communities.

“It is still painful to remember Anna’s struggle with anorexia and how ill-informed we and others were about an illness that over time robbed her of her spirit and her life,” **said Kitty Westin Director Emeritus of the EDC and mother of Anna Westin**. “To date, the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders has trained thousands of health care professionals and has saved countless lives all because of the Anna Westin Act which was passed in 2016. The EDC and our champions in Congress, especially my friend Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), have given us a remarkable gift this holiday season and it is a gift that will keep on giving for years to come. Our

family extends our deepest gratitude to all the individuals who worked to make certain that the Anna Westin Legacy Act made it through Congress during these last days of the session. It truly is a gift that will change and save lives.”

“To honor Anna Westin, a Minnesotan who tragically died of an eating disorder at the young age of 21, I successfully led bipartisan legislation to create the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders, which provides evidence-based education, screening, and intervention training to address eating disorders,” **said Senator Klobuchar**. “Now that the Center has been reauthorized, more people, including service members and veterans, affected by or at-risk of eating disorders will be able to receive the proper care and treatment they need.”

“I’m glad to see the reauthorization and expansion of the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders, which the passage of my Anna Westin Act led to, has been included in the end-of-year package,” **said Senator Capito**. “This reauthorization and expansion will help continue efforts to support individuals affected by eating disorders. The Anna Westin Act has proven to have a profound impact on the millions of Americans experiencing eating disorders and will continue to help ensure those who are struggling will not be denied access to the same mental health services as those facing other types of illness. This is an important step in the right direction.”

“Eating disorders have a huge impact on a person’s physical and mental health. I was proud to co-lead the Anna Westin Legacy Act, and I fought to ensure that this important legislation was included in the omnibus spending bill,” **said Congresswoman Matsui**. “The Anna Westin Legacy Act would formally authorize the Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders so it can continue training health care professionals to screen, briefly intervene, and refer individuals to treatment for eating disorders. This legislation keeps Anna’s voice alive and supports all individuals with eating disorders to access the critical treatments and therapy they need. Once President Biden signs the government funding bill into law, the critical work of improving how we recognize and treat eating disorders can continue for patients and providers nationwide.”

(2) Senate and House champions of eating disorders requests in Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS)

Subcommittee: Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Representatives Ted Deutch (D-FL-22), Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ-02), Andrew Garbarino (R-NY-02), Paul Tonko (D-NY-20), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01), and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-07).

The Congressional package passed LHHS requests for up to one million in funding for the Primary Care Training and Enhancement programs within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to enhance early diagnosis and referral to eating disorders treatment in the primary care setting. Additionally, the package included reintegration of unhealthy weight control practice questions within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Youth Risk

Behavioral Surveillance Survey, and encouragement for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to coordinate and increase eating disorders research funding across NIH Institutes and Centers.

(3) Senate and House champions of eating disorders requests in the Defense Subcommittee: Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Mike Rounds (R-SD), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Representatives Seth Moulton (D-MA-06), Grace Meng (D-NY-06), Veronica Escobar (D-TX-16), and John Katko (R-NY-24).

The Congressional package additionally acknowledged the high rates of eating disorders among servicemembers and their families, calling for the Department of Defense to submit a report to Congress on current military provider education on eating disorders and barriers to implementing mandatory training to that end. Finally, Congress passed the continuation of eating disorders as a research topic under the Defense Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program, which was appropriated at \$370 million in total.

The EDC gives enormous appreciation to all its member organizations, partner organizations, ambassadors, and advocates for taking part in numerous days of actions throughout the year to urge Members of Congress to support the above eating disorders legislation. The EDC could not do its work and would not have passed the above-mentioned legislation without the united voices of its community.

The EDC is deeply disappointed Congress failed to include the bipartisan **Kids Online Safety Act** during final negotiations of the omnibus package. The EDC extends immense gratitude to Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) for their tireless work over the last year. The EDC looks forward to continuing our collective efforts to protect children from social media harms in the next Congress.

“The EDC is grateful Congress is recognizing the severity of eating disorders across the nation and saw the necessity in continuing to devote resources to primary care professionals across the country to ensure they are trained to identify eating disorders early and refer patients in need to life-saving care,” **said Chase Bannister, MDIV, MSW, LCSW, CEDS, EDC Board of Directors President.** “The Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders has already trained over 7,000 providers and the passage of the Anna Westin Legacy Act will further this success and continue to advance the training for our nation’s front-line providers. Additionally, the EDC is tremendously appreciative to Congress for passing funding for research and training for eating disorders. Eating disorders are often overlooked and under-resourced as a serious health condition. For our community, this marks a step forward in catalyzing greater federal response to eating disorders.”

*The **Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action (EDC)** is a Washington, D.C. based, federal advocacy organization comprised of advocacy organizations, academics, treatment providers, family/loved ones of children with eating disorders, and people experiencing eating disorders nationwide. The EDC advances the recognition of eating disorders as a public health priority throughout the United States. Additional resources can be found at eatingdisorderscoalition.org.*

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