



# Eating Disorders Awareness, Prevention, and Education Act

**REQUEST:** The EDC urges Congress to support the *Eating Disorders Awareness, Prevention, and Education Act* a bipartisan bill to raise awareness of and create educational programs to prevent eating disorders.

## **WHY SUPPORT THIS BILL? THE PROBLEM**

- **High prevalence rate.** An estimated 8 million Americans suffer from eating disorders. Eating disorders cut across race, color, gender and socioeconomic categories. No one is immune.
- **On the rise and affecting children.** The incidence of eating disorders has doubled since the 1960s and is increasing in younger age groups, in children as young as seven.
- **Impact on health.** Eating disorder are commonly associated with substantial psychological problems, including depression, substance abuse, and all too frequently with suicide. They also can lead to major medical complications, including cardiac arrhythmia, cognitive impairment, osteoporosis, infertility, and most seriously death. In fact, anorexia nervosa has the highest mortality rate of all the psychiatric disorders.
- **Impact on educational advancement and achievement.** Eating disorders have a negative impact on the educational advancement of a student, a situation often overlooked and rarely addressed in our Nation's schools. Educational efforts to prevent eating disorders are of primary importance to the health, well-being and academic success of our children.

## **THE SOLUTION: PASS THIS BILL**

What would this bill do? It has the following three components:

- 1) **IDENTIFICATION AND EDUCATION.** The bill would amend title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide programs to improve the identification of students with eating disorders, increase awareness of such disorders among parents and students, and train educators (such as teachers, school nurses, school social workers, coaches, school counselors, and administrators) on effective eating disorder prevention and assistance methods.
- 2) **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS.** The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the National Institutes of Health, shall carry out a program to develop, distribute, and promote the broadcasting of public service announcements to improve public awareness, and to promote the identification and prevention, of eating disorders.
- 3) **EATING DISORDER RESEARCH AND REPORT.** Requires the National Center for Education Statistics and the National Center for Health Statistics to conduct a study on the impact eating disorders have on educational advancement and achievement.