The Bill: Inclusion of mental health and eating disorders in the Local School Wellness Policies established by the Child Nutrition & WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004

Wellness policies are required for schools enrolled in the National School Lunch & Breakfast program applicable to 95% of U.S. schools

Policies focus on physical health but miss a key piece of youth wellbeing: mental health

Mental and physical health are inseparable: for example, food insecurity predicts disordered eating, anxiety, and depression

The Need: Over 10 years, youth have reported a 50% increase in negative mental health outcomes

12-13 is the average age of onset for an eating disorder

$247B spent each year on pediatric mental health treatment

41% of teens who died by overdose had suffered a mental health condition

Research highlights that care, support, and belonging at school significantly reduces student mental health conditions

On average, over 3,000 suicide attempts by high schoolers each day

% of high school students that

18% Seriously considered suicide
15% Made a suicide plan
18% Attempted suicide

The Solution: Integrate mental health with physical health into existing policies for cost-effective prevention & early intervention to ensure student wellness

Include school-based mental health professionals and dietitians as optional partners within multidisciplinary teams to create wellness policies

Require USDA to receive technical assistance from SAMHSA

Interested in cosponsoring?
Senate: Email Thomas.Liepold@klobuchar.senate.gov or Linnea_Melbye@lummis.senate.gov
House: Email Fabiana.CorsiMendez@mail.house.gov
Improving Mental Health & Wellness in Schools Act

S.754 | HR.XXX

Sponsors: Sens. Klobuchar (D-MN) & Lummis (R-WY) and Reps. Manning (D-NC) & Xxxxxxxx (R-XX)

Sources


9 Ibid.

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