



Office of Congresswoman  
**KAY GRANGER**



12TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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### **Mental Health Parity**

Yesterday, the House voted on the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (H.R. 6983). The bill is a revised version of the mental health parity bill that the House considered in March.

In March, I was disappointed that the mental health parity bill brought before the House for a vote contained a provision to “pay for” the bill that would harm Texas hospitals. The “pay for” would have banned physician investment in any type of hospital. Physician-owned hospitals serve as an integral part in the future of patient care. They are a benefit to any community. Texas has inpatient rehabilitation hospitals, long term acute care hospitals, general care hospitals, and community hospitals that are nationally recognized as the best in the industry and each and every one of them has physician investment. Patients across our great state have greatly benefited from the safety, quality, and innovation that physician owned hospitals bring.

We all support the goal of equal access to mental health benefits. However, I don't believe it should be paid for by sacrificing facilities that bring quality, efficient and accessible healthcare to our constituents and, more important, to all Americans. My goal is to see fair, affordable, health coverage for all patients suffering from mental illness.

I am pleased we considered a bill that will allow for mental health parity and not harm Texas physician-owned hospitals. I voted for final passage of H.R. 6983, which passed the House by a vote of 376-47.

### **Women in Government Relations Roundtable on Preventive Health**



Last week, I joined Rep. Roybal-Allard (D-CA), Christy Schmidt with American Cancer Society, and Jeff Levi with Trust for America's Health for a roundtable discussion on preventive health care issues and legislation under

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consideration in Congress. I spoke about the need to increase access to affordable health care for families. One way to make health care more affordable would be to enact a tax credit for the purchase of health insurance. My Affordable Health Care Expansion Act (H.R. 5784) would create such a credit. But increasing the number of Americans with health insurance is only part of the picture. Even those with health insurance don't always get the preventive care that they need. Many individuals don't have a regular doctor, and when they get sick, they go to the emergency room for their primary care needs.

To address our country's health care needs, we need to "think outside the box" and work with local communities. Local communities play a pivotal role in increasing access to health care and the prevention screenings that can save lives. We are facing an obesity crisis, and need to get kids exercising now. That is why I host walking challenges and runs for kids in Texas. Getting kids exercising takes creativity, but we need to get them exercising if we are going to prevent our kids from growing up overweight and facing overwhelming health problems.

#### **Congressional Study Group on Public Health Resolution**

In 2006, I founded this group along with Reps. Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) in order to educate our colleagues in Congress about public health issues. In July, along with my Study Group co-chairs, I cosponsored a resolution, H.Con.Res. 1381, calling for an increased federal commitment to prioritizing prevention and public health. The resolution was developed with the Trust for America's Health (TFAH) in response to its new report entitled *Prevention for a Healthier America: Investments in Disease Prevention Yield Significant Savings, Stronger Communities* in which TFAH found that an investment of \$10 per person per year in proven community-based programs to increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent smoking and other tobacco use could save the country more than \$16 billion annually within five years.

I am pleased to report to you that H.Con.Res. 1381, was placed on the schedule for consideration by the full House this week, and passed by voice vote late last evening.

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