

## Steven Sepe

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**From:** Kelly Easton <eastonka@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 9:25 AM  
**To:** Rep. Donovan, Susan R; House Health and Human Services Committee; Rep. Giraldo, Joshua J.; Rep. Potter, Brandon C.; Rep. Ackerman, Mia A.; Rep. Bennett, David A.; Rep. Boylan, Jennifer; Rep. Cotter, Megan L.; Rep. Fogarty, Kathleen A.; Rep. Handy, Arthur; Rep. Hopkins, Marie A.; Rep. Kislak, Rebecca M.; Rep. McGaw, Michelle E.; Rep. Place, David J.; Rep. Speakman, June; Rep. Stewart, Jennifer A.  
**Subject:** Support for Bill 6061

Dear Chairwoman and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee, I am writing in support for Bill 6061. As a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, I feel it is crucial that Mental Health treatment have equal footing with physical healthcare. The reasons are apparent across multiple domains, but I would like to be brief and reiterate that mental health disabilities result in poor health outcomes. The correlation is undeniable and I'm sure quite obvious. Depressed people are less likely to eat healthfully, sleep well, attend health appointments, exercise, work, or socialize, and more likely to be obese, have heart disease, and abuse alcohol/substances. Anxiety/OCD/stress is correlated with heart disease, asthma, gastrointestinal problems, Alzheimer's, smoking, and alcohol use. Untreated mental health issues can be causal in crime, child abuse, poverty, and homelessness, all conditions perpetuating illness and early mortality.

Clearly, children and teens are experiencing negative health outcomes and resultant early mortality. Homicide and suicide are number 2 and 3 for causes of death among teens 15-19. Mental health issues are the undeniable factor in suicide. And while homicide among youths can relate to socio-economic inequities and gang activity, homicide has is obviously related to mental health conditions (even generationally), in particular substance abuse, psychosis, ASD, and social alienation/cyberbullying.

Please consider the moral and logical imperatives and pass Mental Health parity laws.

Best,

Kelly Easton, LMHC

Kelly Easton, MFA, MA, CAGS, LMHC  
Licensed Mental Health Counselor, and Life Coach  
Back Bay Counseling, Modern Health  
Spring Health, Headway  
617-777-4188

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