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#### *The NRLN advocates the rights of more than 2 million American retirees from...*

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Employee / Nokia / North Memorial Medical Center / NSTAR /  
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November 5, 2019

The Honorable Mike Thompson, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Select Reserve Measures  
U.S. House of Representatives  
406 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-0505

Dear Chairman Thompson:

On behalf of the more than 2 million retirees in all 50 states represented by the National Retirees Legislative Network (NRLN), I am writing to thank you for introducing **H.R. 945, Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2019**. It is disappointing that the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means have not acted on your bill.

It is unfortunate that Medicare does not currently allow beneficiaries to receive care from mental health counselors (MHCs) and marriage and family therapists (MFTs), even though MHCs and MFTs are required to obtain education and training equivalent to that of clinical social workers.

Your bill is important because it would expand the pool of mental health professionals by adding MHCs and MFTs to the network of providers delivering mental or behavioral health services to Medicare beneficiaries. Enacting **H.R. 945** would enable Medicare beneficiaries to receive the care they need from thousands of qualified professionals they currently are unable to visit.

I have also sent a letter to Senator John Barrasso to thank him for introducing **S. 286**, the companion bill in the Senate.

The NRLN's full Legislative Agenda and detailed whitepapers can be found at [www.nrln.org](http://www.nrln.org). Your consideration on these issues would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Bill Kadereit*

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