

Regional Leadership Council Chair Hoyer Hosts Mental Health Care Roundtable to Highlight Transformational Impacts of Investing in America Funding in Maryland

HYATTSVILLE, MD — As part of the Regional Leadership Council's Week of Action, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) hosted a roundtable to highlight the second anniversary of the 988 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline with Congressman Glenn Ivey (MD-04) and leaders from Community Crisis Services Incorporated (CCSI), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Maryland Department of Health, and Vibrant Emotional Health.

The discussion took place at CCSI's headquarters in Prince George's County and focused on how direct funding from Democrats' Investing in America agenda is expanding the life-saving reach of 988, improving public awareness and access to care, and supporting the mental health care workforce in Maryland. Congressman Hoyer and roundtable participants highlighted how Investing in America funding is supporting crisis call centers, like CCSI, that provide accessible services for Marylanders in crisis, including through American Sign Language (ASL), Spanish language, and text and chat services.

"As House Majority Leader in the 117th Congress, I was proud to bring the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act and the American Rescue Plan to the Floor to help fund essential mental health care services like the 988 Suicide and Crisis Prevention Hotline," **said Congressman Hoyer**. "I am so grateful to have exceptional mental health care providers in our community, like CCSI, that provide these life-saving services. It's an honor to support their work and I am committed to ensuring that funds from Democrats' Investing in America agenda continue to improve and expand accessible mental health care in Maryland."

"It is great to see the good work being done in the mental health and suicide prevention space by our 988 Lifeline partners, especially those at CCSI, Inc. I commend RLC Chair Hoyer and our other Democratic leaders for passing and implementing our Investing in America Agenda. These dollars dedicated to saving lives, bring out the best in our community to empathize with, and empower people, to seek help instead of self-harm or visit hurt upon others. I look forward to a happier, healthier community as the dividends from these investments in the American Rescue Plan and other government programs yields fruitful results. Keep up the sterling efforts," **said Congressman Glenn Ivey (MD-04)**.

"I am grateful to Congressman Hoyer and Congressman Ivey for hosting this roundtable with Maryland state and local Hyattsville partners," **said Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D., HHS Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use and the leader of SAMHSA**. "We appreciate the support for 988 and look forward to working together in expanding the 988 crisis care continuum and improving access to care for Marylanders and all Americans."

"The Maryland Department of Health is committed to ensuring we have a world class, equitable system of behavioral health care in Maryland. 988 is a critical entry point to help Marylanders with urgent behavioral health needs, including those who are in crisis," **said Maryland Department of Health Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health Alyssa Lord**. "We are grateful to our federal Congressional

delegation for their support of 988, and to our call center partners, including CCSI, who support Marylanders and connect them to resources and services when they need it most."

"The 9-8-8 Crisis and Suicide hotline provides a safe space for folks to reach out for help," **said Tim Jansen, CEO of Community Crisis Services, Inc.** "It's daunting to call a stranger for help when your life may be on the line, 9-8-8 Call Specialists provide help and hope. Hope's new number is 9-8-8."

"We are grateful to Representatives Hoyer and Ivey for hosting this important roundtable with our federal partners SAMHSA and the crisis contact center CCSI, which allows us to showcase the critical work being done through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline," **said Laura Evans, Assistant Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs at Vibrant Emotional Health.** "These discussions underscore the importance of ensuring that everyone in crisis has access to the life-saving care and emotional support they need. We are proud of the historic progress that has occurred over the past two years of the 988 Lifeline's availability, and are hopeful for continued shifts in local, state, and federal policies to support individuals who may be experiencing a mental health emergency."

About 988:

The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) launched the 988 Lifeline on July 16, 2022. Since then, Congressional Democrats have made significant investments in expanding and supporting the lifeline, including recently through the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the American Rescue Plan, and the FY 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices.