



# Illinois Psychiatric Society

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **Senate Committee Approves Addition of Eating Disorders to List of Mental Illnesses Covered by Illinois Parity Bill**

**Chicago, Illinois** - The Illinois Psychiatric Society (IPS), a state association of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), applauds Rep. Fred Crespo and Senator John Cullerton for the recent passage of the Eating Disorder Parity bill, HB 1432, from the Senate Insurance Committee by a vote of 9-0. The Illinois Psychiatric Society would like to thank all of the members of the Committee as well for their recognition of the importance of this bill. HB 1432 will ensure parity for all mental illnesses by adding eating disorders to the list of disorders that must be covered by insurers. Eating disorders are serious illnesses and affect several million people at any given time. "These illnesses, particularly anorexia nervosa, are killers," said Dr. Sheldon Miller, president of the Illinois Psychiatric Society. "This is not something we can take very lightly. There's a very high death rate, and there's a high probability of failure to treat, resulting in some very bad things happening to people."

Anorexia nervosa is the third most common chronic illness in adolescent females. The mortality rate of anorexia nervosa is nearly 12 times greater than the rate due to all causes of death among females, ages 15 to 24. Suicide is a major cause of death in anorexia, with estimated deaths ranging between 27-42%.

Mental health parity isn't only right, it's smart. Untreated mental illnesses, including eating disorders, impose a significant financial burden on patients, families and businesses, primarily through productivity losses - \$204 billion annually, according to the most recent estimates. The fact is any increased costs associated with parity are minimal.

The Illinois Psychiatric Society urges citizens of Illinois to contact their state senators and ask them to support the bill as it proceeds to the floor of the Senate.

### **About the Illinois Psychiatric Association:**

The Illinois Psychiatric Association is a district branch of a national medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) and [www.HealthyMinds.org](http://www.HealthyMinds.org).