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REPS. JEN KIGGANS, DANNY DAVIS, AND BRITTANY PETTERSEN REINTRODUCE BIPARTISAN BILL TO STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE AND EXPAND MENTAL HEALTH ACCESS FOR MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES

[Washington, D.C.] – The Coalition for Social Work and Health (CSWH) applauds the reintroduction of the **Integrating Social Workers Across Health Care Settings Act (H.R. 4185)**, a bipartisan bill led by **Representatives Jen Kiggans (R-VA), Danny Davis (D-IL), and Brittany Pettersen (D-CO)**. This legislation addresses critical gaps in Medicare by allowing clinical social workers (CSWs) to practice and bill in accordance with their full state scope of practice, ultimately improving access to mental and behavioral health care for older adults and other vulnerable Americans.

Within healthcare settings, social workers use their unique skills to support patients through complex care journeys. From coordinating access to medication or employment resources to addressing caregiver burnout and mental health challenges, social workers are often at the center of care teams. However, under current Medicare law, CSWs can only bill for a narrow set of mental health services, limiting their ability to practice to the full extent of their training.

"As a geriatric nurse practitioner, I understand how essential mental and behavioral health care is to healthy aging," said Rep. Kiggans. *"This bipartisan bill improves access to care by allowing clinical social workers to fully support patients through diagnosis, treatment, and care coordination."*

Rep. Davis added, *"Clinical social workers play an indispensable role in helping older adults and other vulnerable individuals address mental health challenges. Our bill ensures they are supported and empowered to provide the care that is so desperately needed."*

"For patients and families, care from a clinical social worker can make all the difference. The Integrating Social Workers Across Health Care Settings Act invests in this key workforce and helps unlock their full potential to improve health outcomes and advance equity," shared the Coalition for Social Work and Health.

H.R. 4185 would enable CSWs to bill Medicare for services they are already authorized to perform under state law, such as care coordination, discharge planning, and screening for social drivers of health. By modernizing these outdated billing rules, the legislation strengthens the care infrastructure that supports older adults, people with chronic conditions, and those facing mental health challenges.

"The National Association of Social Workers is proud to endorse the Integrating Social Workers Across Health Care Settings Act. This bipartisan bill will expand integrated care, helping patients access the mental health services they need in any health care setting. It helps social workers meet clients where they are," said NASW CEO Anthony Estreet, PhD, MBA, LCSW-C.

"Clinical social workers are essential partners to family caregivers, helping assess and address the non-medical needs of those receiving care. Families are often exhausted and overwhelmed, unsure of what options even exist. By investing in clinical social workers, we can improve the quality of care, support families in keeping their loved ones at home longer, and ultimately reduce costs across both health and long-term care systems," said Jason Resendez, President and CEO of the National Alliance for Caregiving.

"Social workers are an integral part of the person and family-centered serious illness care team, and we appreciate you reintroducing this important bipartisan legislation," said John Broyles, CEO of the Coalition to Transform Advanced Care.

The Coalition urges members of Congress to support H.R. 4185 and commit to a more integrated, person-centered approach to health care.

To learn more about the bill or get involved, visit: https://www.socialworkandhealth.org/take-action.

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