



**Pacific Clinics**  
ADVANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

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February 22, 2013

The Honorable Grace Napolitano  
32<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District  
1610 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

Pacific Clinics is pleased to support your legislation, previously introduced in the last three Congresses, the Mental Health in Schools Act. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your tireless advocacy on behalf of children, their families, veterans, and underserved communities to have increased access to mental health services. As the Co- Chair of the Congressional Mental Health Caucus, you have historically held hearings and introduced legislation to heighten awareness of the needs within the public mental health system. As the tragedy in Newton, Connecticut renewed the nation's focus on violence and school safety, we stand in strong support of your legislative efforts to enhance school based comprehensive mental health programs.

As the largest behavioral health care provider in Los Angeles County, Pacific Clinics has long recognized the importance of prevention and treatment services for children and their families to ensure their best educational learning and well-being. One such example is our Latina Youth Program located in Santa Fe Springs, which was established initially as a demonstration project with your Office. The stories from the program's children, families, and surrounding communities show the effectiveness in doing prevention and treatment services in a culturally responsive manner. Prior to any specific intervention, early identification of children who are at-risk or have social, emotional, behavioral problems is a first step to helping them receive appropriate care. Therefore, training school personnel on methods to early identify these children and mechanisms to link them to appropriate services is crucial for any successful school based mental health program. We believe that the Mental Health in Schools Act has included this element and other necessary provisions in a comprehensive and thoughtful manner.

We look forward to working with your staff to enact this key legislation in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan Mandel".

Susan Mandel, Ph.D.  
President and Chief Executive Officer

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