



## Summary of the FREED Act (H.R. 1193)

The EDC worked with Members of Congress to conceptualize and draft the Federal Response to Eliminate Eating Disorders (the FREED Act), which is a comprehensive bill on eating disorders addressing research, treatment, education and prevention. The bill addresses the following:

### Research Initiatives

- **Know the numbers through a national data base and other initiatives.** Determine the prevalence, incidence, and correlates of all eating disorders (anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder and eating disorder not otherwise specified).
- **Know the death rates.** Determine the morbidity and mortality rates associated with all eating disorders and provide a public report of this data annually.
- **Know the costs or “economic burden” of eating disorders.** Undertake the necessary investigations to conduct an economic analysis of the costs of eating disorders in the United States, including years of productive life lost, missed days of work, reduced work productivity, costs of medical/psychiatric treatment, prescriptions medications, hospitalizations, costs of medical and psychiatric comorbidities, (cost to family, cost to society) etc.
- **Establish Centers of Excellence.** Develop an integrated system of Centers of Excellence for eating disorders, which will provide training opportunities for research, fund research programs, and coordinate the development of a research infrastructure nationwide.

### Access to Adequate and Appropriate Treatment

- **All Americans with eating disorders deserve access to care.** Any insurer that provides health coverage for physical illness must provide coverage for eating disorders.
- **Care according to universally accepted criteria.** Insurers are to follow standards of care as written in the Practice Guidelines for the Treatment of Patients with Eating Disorders by the American Psychiatric Association.
  - ✓ **The treatment setting must be appropriate to the patient’s needs and clinical presentation.** Decisions regarding the treatment setting must include individual variables such as age, sex, ability to manage severity or co-morbidity, family involvement, and staff expertise and training.
  - ✓ **Eating Disorders are complex conditions and require comprehensive treatment approaches.** All treatment modalities should be covered, including but not limited to family, individual and group therapies, nutrition counseling, psychopharmacology, body Image therapy, and medical treatment.

### Education & Prevention Initiatives

- **Study mandatory BMI reporting in school.** Determine the outcome of measuring BMI in schools and reporting the results to parents (including measuring eating disorders symptoms, and incidence of teasing or bullying based on body size).
- **Grant Program of the Education and Training for all Health Professionals.** Train health professionals, to identify, prevent, appropriately treat and address the complications of eating disorders (using a team approach).
- **Grant Program for the Education and Training for School/Higher Education Professionals.** Train education professionals in evidence-based education programs about eating disorders, education professionals include teachers, professors, school nurses, school aides, community liaisons, cooks, dieticians, social workers, counselors, coaches, athletic departments, and other.
- **Educating the public through Public Service Announcements (PSAs).** Use PSAs to educate the public on types and the seriousness of (prevalence, comorbidities, health consequences –both physical and mental) eating disorders, how to obtain help, discrimination and bullying based on mental illness, body size, and the effects of media on self esteem and body image.
- **Bring eating disorders into already existing obesity initiatives.** Federally funded campaigns to fight obesity should also address eating disorders. Federal studies should include eating disorder related questions.

To cosponsor FREED, contact Laurel Havas in Congressman Kennedy's office.