

### *The Grief Resilience Investment and Education Fund (GRIEF) Act*

The COVID-19 Pandemic has exacerbated existing gaps in our mental health care system. One such gap is access to bereavement care. Bereavement is the natural grief from the loss of a loved one. Families of hospice patients are provided with up to thirteen months of bereavement care after the death of a loved one as part of the Medicare hospice benefit. However, the COVID-19 pandemic severely limited access to hospice and palliative care – because patients were dying quickly and unexpectedly, within an overloaded health care system. Therefore, many families have been left without access to this critical care.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, grieving individuals, families, children, and communities need access to timely bereavement care that is provided by experts who are knowledgeable, experienced, and trained in helping others cope with grief. This legislation aims to ensure that Americans who have suffered because of a mass-casualty incident receive the care they need and deserve.

Specifically, it provides:

- \$100 million for **Grief Counseling for Individuals and Families** to cover the costs of operating grief support groups, software/hardware for operating remote/virtual counseling as needed, and providing other community-based grief and bereavement services.
- \$50 million for **provision of care for children** related who have experienced loss related to the pandemic.
- \$40 million for **Education and Training for Bereavement Care Providers and Peer Support** to expand bereavement services. This funding will provide training for mental health care providers to expand the care they provide in these circumstances, train additional providers to fill gaps in bereavement care and provide funding for training for peer-to-peer bereavement support.
- \$50 million for a **National Public Information Campaign** that educates Americans about grief and loss as well as the availability of resources throughout their communities. By making people more aware of these resources, we can ensure more people take advantage of these services, minimizing the negative consequences of unsupported and unacknowledged grief.
- \$10 million for **Research on COVID-19 and Complicated Grief** to examine the experience of complicated and prolonged grief, and the efficacy of treatment approaches.