

From: Ron Honberg

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Re: Mental Health Provisions in Obama Administration's Proposals on Gun Violence

The Obama Administration today issued a package of actions designed to reduce gun violence in America. NAMI's Executive Director, Mary Giliberti, was invited and attended the announcement of these initiatives. Three of these proposed actions would apply specifically to mental health care.

1. The Administration proposes to add \$500 million in new federal funding for mental health care. It is important to note that the additional funding proposed by the Administration will be subject to Congressional approval through the 2017 Appropriations process and, at this time, we do not have further information about what the investment would fund.

NAMI's position is that, at a time when public mental health systems across the country are still reeling from more than \$4 billion in cuts during the peak of the recession, we welcome an additional infusion of federal resources in mental health care.

2. The Administration has directed the Social Security Administration (SSA) to issue a draft rule clarifying whether individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits who have a Representative Payee to manage their funds should be included in the federal database (NCICS) listing individuals who are prohibited from possessing firearms.

NAMI is reserving comments until we see the proposed rule language. NAMI's longstanding position is that inclusion in the NCICS database should be based on scientific research identifying factors that correlate with increased risks for violence, not generalized assumptions. We will be seeking broad input from our members so we can inform the administration based on the lived experience of NAMI's members in our comments and discussions.

3. The Administration will be issuing a final rule clarifying how HIPAA, the federal privacy law, applies to state reporting to the NCICS system. It is expected that this rule will explain that HIPAA does not prevent states from reporting names for inclusion in NCICS.

In 2013, NAMI submitted comments in response to an earlier draft of this rule. NAMI's comments can be found by clicking [here](#).