



December 21, 2020

Dear Biden-Harris Transition Team,

Patrick Kennedy is the ideal person to lead the Biden Administration's Office of National Drug Control Policy. Patrick's foundational achievements to help heal Americans struggling with addiction and mental health demonstrate that he has the experience and relationships to get the right things done. Moreover, his lived experience-based integrity, resolve, and compassion come through in everything he does, both as a leader and personally. I have gratefully known and worked with my friend Patrick for over a decade, and I can testify to both these points.

Toward improving recovery for Americans with behavioral health challenges, Patrick has transformed both the policy and research landscapes. His leadership in the passage of the Federal Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 is viewed with reverence as a foundational achievement in behavioral health advocacy. Along with my parents, Shari and Garen Staglin, Patrick co-founded One Mind, the leading nonprofit accelerating collaborative research and advocacy to enable all individuals with brain health conditions to build healthy, productive lives. His founding leadership of the Kennedy Forum has been similarly dynamic, as shown in the host of innovations to empower advocates across the nation to join in the fight for parity. And just today, Patrick's role as the public-facing voice of an alliance among leaders of the leading US behavioral health organizations, in which I participate, has spurred Congress to include in COVID-19 relief provisions an unprecedented \$4.25 billion to SAMHSA to provide increased mental health and substance abuse services and support to Americans. These are but the four highlights I know best out of Patrick's storied career—these alone would qualify Patrick to lead the ONDCP.

How does he do it? Through from-the-heart leadership. Patrick's lived experience with addiction, mental health and recovery has imbued him with a deep resolve to help his fellow Americans facing behavioral health challenges. At One Mind's launch summit in 2011, at which then-Vice President Joe Biden gave the keynote, I watched in awe as Patrick tenaciously exhorted scientists and policymakers to accelerate brain health research to rescue those who struggle. At One Mind's quarterly Board meetings, Patrick's highly engaged ideas are always constructive and have advanced our mission to accelerate brain health for all. He is such a committed public speaker for the cause that, despite a chock-full calendar, he has graciously roused the audience at every One Mind speaking opportunity I have offered him this year, pro bono. And in private conversations, I have seen the genuine forthrightness and compassion that guide his life and his career.

I wholeheartedly recommend Patrick Kennedy to lead the ONDCP. Questions? I am at your service.

Best regards,

Brandon Staglin  
President, One Mind  
brandon.staglin@onemind.org