United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6200

April 26, 2010

Via Electronic Transmission

Michael J. Fitzpatrick
Executive Director
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Colonial Place Three
2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Stephen H. Feinstein, M.D.
President
National Board of Directors
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Colonial Place Three
2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Fitzpatrick and Dr. Feinstein:

The United States Senate Committee on Finance (Committee) has jurisdiction over the Medicare and Medicaid programs and, accordingly, a responsibility to the more than 100 million Americans who receive health care coverage under these programs. As Ranking Member of the Committee, I have a duty to protect the health of Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries and safeguard taxpayer dollars authorized by Congress for these programs.

For the last three years, the Committee has been making inquiries into various aspects of the pharmaceutical industry, including consulting arrangements and industry funding for Continuing Medical Education (CME) and nonprofit organizations. Specifically, I was concerned about the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and its policy of accepting industry funding. The term "industry funding" was defined to include any transfer of value from a pharmaceutical company, including but not limited to grants, donations, and sponsorship for meetings or programs.

During conversations last fall, NAMI National leadership informed my staff members that NAMI National was not aware of the amount of donations NAMI state chapters were receiving from pharmaceutical companies. In October 2009, I sent a request to each individual NAMI state chapter requesting an accounting of industry funding that pharmaceutical companies and/or foundations established by these companies provided to each NAMI state chapter. This request covered the period of January 2005 to October 2009.

Below is a chart representing the data each state individually submitted to the Committee. Specifically, this chart highlights the top ten NAMI state chapters receiving contributions from pharmaceutical companies, and/or foundations established by these companies (monetary value was rounded to nearest $1,000). Again, the time span of the request covered January 2005 to October 2009.

NAMI State Chapter	Total Contributions
California NAMI	$632,000
Delaware NAMI	$269,000
Florida NAMI	$414,000
Indiana NAMI	$356,000
Massachusetts NAMI	$308,000
Minnesota NAMI	$291,000
New York NAMI	$448,000
North Carolina NAMI	$250,000
Ohio NAMI	$623,000
Pennsylvania NAMI	$250,000

Further, after reviewing the data submitted by the NAMI state chapters, it is clear to me that the contributions were concentrated in three major pharmaceutical companies, as demonstrated by the chart below.

Pharmaceutical Company	Total Contributions to NAMI State Chapters
AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals	$1,600,000
Bristol-Myers Squibb	$1,300,000
Eli Lilly and Company	$2,200,000
GlaxoSmithKline	$305,000
Janssen	$470,000

I understand that NAMI National now publishes its pharmaceutical company funding on an online database.[1] I applaud this action toward greater transparency, congratulate you for increasing the public's trust in your efforts, and believe others should give serious condsideration to doing the same. At the same time I am greatly interested in what NAMI National is doing to make NAMI state chapters more transparent. As you can see from the charts set forth above, NAMI chapters are surely accepting funds from pharmaceutical companies, and some of them have accepted substantial sums over the period of our inquiry.

Accordingly, I would appreciate NAMI's response to the following questions. For each question, please respond by first repeating the enumerated question followed by the appropriate answer:

1) What steps, if any, is NAMI National taking to help the NAMI state chapters make their sources of funding transparent? Please explain in detail.

[1] http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=Major_Foundation_and_Corporate_Support.

2) What does NAMI National do to ensure that money received by NAMI state chapters is being used properly and in accordance with all applicable law? Please explain in detail.

3) Will NAMI National require NAMI state chapter leaders to complete and file conflict of interest forms? Please explain in detail.

I received responses from the overwhelming majority of NAMI state chapters and for that I am very grateful. At the same time however; and despite repeated requests over the course of months the following organizations failed to respond to my inquiry:

- Alabama NAMI;
- Arizona NAMI;
- Connecticut NAMI; and
- Hawaii NAMI.

Does NAMI National believe that it is acceptable that these NAMI State Chapters failed to respond? Please explain in detail.

I look forward to hearing from you by no later than May 10, 2010. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Brian Downey or Paul Thacker of my Committee staff at 202-224-4515. All documents responsive to this request should be sent electronically, on a disc, in searchable PDF format to Brian Downey at Brian_Downey@finance-rep.senate.gov.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member