



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Representative Annie Spell, PhD Recognized as 2026 Recovery Champion of the Year for Significant Contributions to Addiction Treatment and Recovery

September 1, 2026 – In observance of National Recovery Month, the Coalition of Louisiana Addiction Service & Prevention Providers (CLASPP) is honored to announce that state Representative Annie Spell, PhD (R-Lafayette) has been recognized as **2026 Recovery Champion of the Year** for her significant legislative contributions to strengthening addiction prevention, treatment and recovery services in Louisiana.

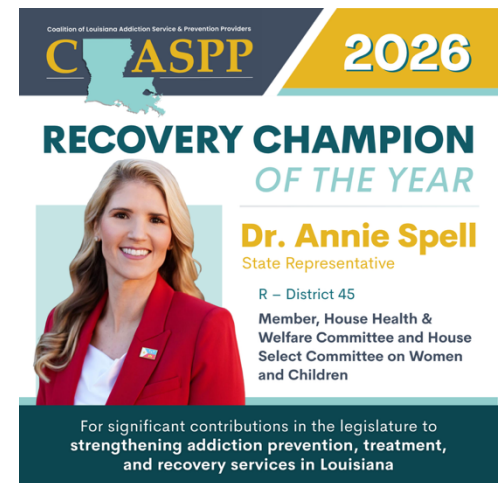
“Representative Spell demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring Louisianans affected by addiction have access to the services and support necessary to achieve recovery,” said **Dr. Emily Tilley, President of CLASPP and Executive Director of O’Brien House**. “Her advocacy has helped elevate the needs of individuals, families, and providers, and we are grateful for her continued leadership on these critical issues.”

Dr. Spell is serving her first term in the Louisiana House of Representatives. As a member of the House Health & Welfare Committee and the House Select Committee on Women and Children, Dr. Spell’s efforts to strengthen behavioral health services in Louisiana—coupled with her professional career as a clinical child and adolescent psychologist—clearly demonstrate her leadership as a knowledgeable and determined champion for recovery and wellbeing.

“Representative Annie Spell embodies what it means to be a Recovery Champion. Her active participation on the House Health and Welfare Committee and her own legislation ensures access to behavioral health care for the people of Louisiana. Her leadership in passing HB909 to require commercial insurance coverage for crisis services will transform the landscape of care in Louisiana,” said **Dr. Holly Howat, Assistant Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health Office of Behavioral Health**. “On a personal level, Annie’s support has meant more than I can ever fully express. In the aftermath of the Mall of Louisiana shooting, she stood beside the survivors and those grieving with compassion, advocacy, and mentorship. Her ability to pair legislative strength with genuine human care is rare, and it is exactly what makes her such an extraordinary partner in strengthening addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery services across our state.”

“This recognition is especially meaningful because it reflects the collective work of so many advocates, providers, and families who fight every day to improve behavioral health in Louisiana,” said **Representative Annie Spell, PhD**. “From strengthening mental health services to advancing policies that support recovery and reduce barriers to care, I am proud to champion legislation that puts people first. Together, we will continue to build a healthier, stronger, more resilient Louisiana.”

Dr. Spell will be presented with the *2026 Recovery Champion of the Year Award* at O’Brien House’s Annual Recovery Breakfast in Baton Rouge later this month.



About CLASPP: Founded in 2006, the Coalition of Louisiana Addiction Service & Prevention Providers (CLASPP) is a grassroots, member-led association of addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery provider agencies. CLASPP’s mission is to enhance prevention and addiction recovery services in Louisiana through education, awareness, and advocacy.