



Capitol News!

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Dear NASHIA Member,

Welcome to Vol. 7, Issue 6, of **Capitol News**, which you receive as a NASHIA member. Last Friday, NASHIA unveiled its new website. All the public policy information has been updated and posted. All issues of Capitol News, the legislative grid and Action Alerts, as well as the Public Policy Platform, are posted under the heading of *Priorities*. Under *Key Issues*, are copies of support letters and testimony pertaining to this session of Congress. Information pertaining to previous Congressional sessions is posted under *Archives*. Other information is posted under *Resources*, *Get Involved*, as well as *State Issues* that features state policies and legislation. Please take time to see the resources available to you at www.nashia.org.

NASHIA's mailing address has been reactivated. You may contact Susan L. Vaughn, Director of Public Policy, if you have any questions at publicpolicy@nashia.org.

This Week in Congress

Both the House and Senate are in session this week. The Senate failed this week to achieve the 60 votes needed to overcome a procedural hurdle and vote on final passage of a substitute amendment to the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopsholes Act, H.R. 4213, introduced by Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) and Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) on June 29, to reinstate federal unemployment insurance benefits and extend the purchase closing date for new homebuyers to qualify for tax credits. These provisions were stripped from H.R. 4213, which also contains Medicaid extension provisions. More information is provided further in this issue.

Budget Resolution

House Plans "Deeming Resolution"

House leaders announced this week plans to include a "deeming resolution" setting the FY 2011 discretionary spending cap as part of the war supplemental bill under consideration in the House. The cap reportedly will be \$7 billion less than the President's budget request and \$3 billion less than the budget proposal approved by the Senate Budget Committee earlier this year. Senate Budget Committee Chair Kent Conrad (D-ND) has indicated that the Senate also likely will set the spending cap through a deeming resolution; however, Senate Appropriations Chair Daniel Inouye (D-HI) has indicated that the Senate cap will match the level in the Senate Budget Committee's proposal, not the House level.

The purpose of the budget resolution is to set the amount of expected revenue and expenditures for the Congressional committees

as a guideline. The amount anticipated to be available for funding federal governmental programs is given to the House/Senate Appropriations Committees who determine how that money is divided among the programs.

Appropriations

FY 2010 Supplemental Spending Bill

The House supplemental spending bill for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is stalled. House Appropriations Chairman David Obey (D-WI) had proposed adding \$23 billion in education funding to prevent as many as 300,000 teacher layoffs in the coming year, however there is not enough support for this provision. House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-SC) is polling House members to determine if they would support a \$37 billion supplemental war spending bill to include \$10 billion in domestic education spending to prevent 140,000 school employee layoffs. The spending could only be used to preserve jobs in elementary, junior high and high schools, and could not supplant state education funding or pay down school debt. The House plans to consider an amendment to the Senate's version of the bill, passed in May, which did not include education funds.

FY 2011 Appropriations

The House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee approved by voice vote its spending bill. This is the first of the 12 annual spending bills to be considered by either chamber. Appropriators previously had announced plans to mark up two bills each week, with the Labor-HHS-Education spending bill scheduled to be considered last. However, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer's (D-MD) announced this week that the House will leave for August recess on July 30 - one week earlier than scheduled - which may complicate those plans.

Housing and Urban Development

On Thursday, the House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. John Olver (D-MA), may mark up its FY 2011 bill. Disability advocates have aggressively been working to restore a proposed cut which would eliminate production of new units in the Section 811 Supporting Housing for Persons with Disabilities program. The Section 811 program allows persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the community by increasing the supply of rental housing with the availability of supportive services. The program also provides project rental assistance, which covers the difference between the HUD-approved operating costs of the project and the tenants' contribution toward rent. The program is similar to Supportive Housing for the Elderly (Section 202).

Social Security Administration

NASHIA signed on to a letter along with 40 other advocacy groups that was sent to House Committee Appropriators requesting that the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee provide funding the President's FY 2011 budget request of \$12.528 billion for the efficient and effective operation of the Social Security Administration (SSA). The letter stresses that the recommended funding level would be a significant positive step towards improving SSA's services to older Americans, people with disabilities, workers of all ages, and survivors of workers.

OMB Directs Agencies to Identify Wasteful Programs/Reduce Spending for FY 2012

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Peter Orszag has directed non-security agencies to identify "wasteful programs" -- those considered to be performing poorly -- and to reduce their budgets for FY 2012 by 5 percent; and to trim \$8 billion in federal building costs. Information about areas for cuts is due as an addendum to agencies' budget submissions on September 13, 2010. OMB and the General Services Administration (GSA) are to establish a government-wide "do not pay list" database to ensure agencies no longer send government checks to delinquent or jailed contractors, and other ineligible people or organizations. Plans are also in the works for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to trim waste by implementing an online fraud-detection program. According to OMB, about 20,000 separate payments totaling \$182 million were sent to people no longer living in the last three years, and CMS made \$65 billion in erroneous payments in FY 2009.

Other Legislation and Hearings

Medicaid and Tax Relief Extension Bill

The Senate has been unable to pass H.R. 4213, the "tax extenders" bill which contains the six-month extension of enhanced federal matching funds for Medicaid (referred to as the FMAP). Last Wednesday night, Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) offered a substitute amendment to change the base FMAP increase for 3 months (3d quarter of 2011) to 3.2% and for the next three months (4th quarter

of 2011) to 1.2%. It appears that the amendment does not change the additional tiers of FMAP increases for states with higher unemployment rates.

Under current law, the federal Medicaid matching rate is increased by 6.2 percentage points for all states, and by additional percentage points for states with high unemployment. These temporary increases were enacted in the Recovery Act in February 2009 in response to the increased Medicaid caseloads and decreasing state revenues resulting from the recession. The increase is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2010. The previous substitute amendment would have extended these increases for six months, through June 30, 2011. The modification will continue the additional federal assistance for six months, but would phase the level of assistance down.

For January - March, 2011, the federal Medicaid matching rate would be increased by 3.2 percentage points for all States, and for April - June, 2011, the federal Medicaid matching rate would be increased by 1.2 percentage points for all States. For the same six-month period, states with high unemployment would continue to receive the additional percentage points, as they do under current law. This will ensure that states continue to receive increases throughout state fiscal year 2011. This modification reduces the cost of the bill by \$8 billion over ten years.

The Senate has tried twice to obtain the 60 votes necessary to end filibuster and move the tax extenders package forward. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) has begun breaking the bill into smaller pieces in hopes of moving less controversial provisions forward, but the larger package is not likely to move unless leaders can come up with a way to offset its cost. The Senate is short of the 60 votes needed to advance an extension of federal unemployment benefits.

The House of Representatives passed the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act (H.R. 4213) on May 28th. The bill includes tax-cut extensions, assistance for disaster-stricken farmers, extra pay for some veterans, expanded unemployment benefits and eligibility for COBRA health insurance subsidies for jobless workers, and spending for affordable housing (National Housing Trust Fund).

Senate Passes Medicare Doctor-Payment Extension Bill

On Friday, June 18th, the Senate passed a \$6.5 billion bill to extend Medicare reimbursement for doctors for six-months in order to prevent a 21 percent cut after June 1st. A previous short-term extension expired June 1, but the Administration has prevented the cut from taking effect until now. This provision was included in the larger tax and benefits package that has been stalled for months. The bill must also pass the House.

Senate Olmstead Hearing

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held a hearing on enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision last Tuesday, June 22. The hearing featured presentations on community opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Witnesses included Nancy Thaler, Executive Director, National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services, Kelly Buckland, Executive Director, National Council on Independent Living, Washington, DC, and Cindy Mann, Director, Center for Medicaid and State Operations, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Baltimore. The hearing coincided with the 11th anniversary of Olmstead.

House Technology Hearing

The House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet held a hearing on H.R. 3101, the Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2009, sponsored by Representative Edward Markey (D-MA.). The bill would enable people with disabilities to fully use broadband services and equipment and provide better access to video programming devices such as remote controls, menus on DVD players, etc. Read testimony and download the video at:

http://energycommerce.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2038:hearing-on-hr-3101-the-twenty-first-century-communications-and-video-accessibility-act-of-2009&catid=134:subcommittee-on-communications-technology-and-the-internet&Itemid=74

Senate VA Committee Sends Recommendations to VA/DoD

In a letter to the secretaries of the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI) and a bipartisan group of Veterans' Affairs and Armed Services committee members urged stronger coordination and better follow up on TBI. The Senators called for specific improvements from Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki, including:

- Prompt action to finalize and implement DOD's draft policy mandating evaluation and rest periods for individuals with TBI, and to ensure that existing policies are being adhered to by each military service branch;
- Action to ensure documentation of TBI and follow-up during Post-Deployment Health Assessments and Reassessments;
- Expedited establishment of DOD centers of excellence for military eye injuries, and for hearing loss and amputations;
- Quicker progress to make VA/DOD collaboration and data transfers more robust, comprehensive, and seamless; and
- Making full use of authority granted by Congress for VA to partner with state, local, and community providers to improve access to care and reduce the burden on veterans receiving treatment for TBI, and their family members.

Last month, the Veterans' Affairs Committee held an oversight hearing on the state of care for troops and veterans suffering from TBI. NASHIA submitted testimony. In January 2008, Congress passed provisions authored by Chairman Akaka and approved by the Veterans' Affairs Committee to reform VA/DOD collaboration and care related to TBI as part of the National Defense Authorization Act. To view the letter go to: http://veterans.senate.gov/upload/6_16_2010_TBI%20FOLLOW%20UP.PDF.

Administration

Americans with Disabilities Act

White House Celebrates ADA Anniversary

On June 6, Valerie Jarrett, Senior Advisor to President Obama, kicked off the President's and White House's celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by delivering remarks to over 2,000 people from around the World at the VSA International Festival at the Kennedy Center. The ADA is important civil rights legislation that prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation. Senior administration officials will continue to commemorate the ADA anniversary in the weeks to come with new policies and events.

DoT Announces New Rule Regarding Travel

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood has announced the first federal rule to specifically provide ADA protections to people with disabilities who travel on boats and ships. Under the rule, vessel operators cannot charge extra for accessibility-related services to passengers, require passengers to furnish their own attendants, or deny access to passengers based on disability. This rule does not establish physical accessibility standards for new construction or alteration of vessels, however. The new rule will become effective 120 days after it is published. There will be a 90-day comment period. For more information and instructions for submitting comments, view the pdf at <http://www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/home.html#documentDetail?R=0900006480b03822>.

Department of Justice Reaches Settlement with Pennsylvania

The U.S. Department of Justice reached settlement agreements under Title II of the ADA with Smyth County, Virginia and Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to improve access to their facilities, programs and services, including polling places and emergency services. Lancaster County was ordered to pay \$1,000 to a veteran who was denied access to the court system. Title II applies to state and local governments. For additional information, see: <http://www.ada.gov/civicac.htm>

US District Court in Jacksonville Rules in Favor of Plaintiff

The U.S. District Court in Jacksonville, Florida ordered the state of Florida to provide home and community based services to Michele Haddad who has quadriplegia and has lived in the community with support for several years, but had changes in her caregiver situation. Haddad, who had been on the waiting list for Medicaid community-based waiver services for two years, notified the state of her increased need for services, but were told that community services would only be available if she was willing to enter a nursing home for 60 days.

The U.S. Department of Justice filed an amicus brief in the case in support of Ms. Haddad and argued that Haddad would suffer irreparable harm if forced to enter a nursing home to receive necessary services. The court ordered the state to provide community-based services as required by the ADA's integration mandate as set forth in *Olmstead v. L.C.* The Court issued the order in the week that marks the eleventh anniversary of the *Olmstead* decision. See DOJ's press release for further information at:

<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/June/10-crt-741.html>.

Department of Health and Human Services

HHS Announces New Community Living Initiative

In honor of the one year anniversary of the *Year of Community Living* and the eleven year anniversary of the Olmstead decision, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a new program within the Community Living Initiative. The Housing Capacity Building Initiative for Community Living is a \$3.2 million, three-year contract designed to create partnership between HHS and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The initiative will provide technical assistance to state and local entities to plan and implement effective program options that link housing with long-term care services and supports for people with disabilities and older adults.

HHS Announces Availability of Caregiver Grants

On June 3rd, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced the availability of \$60 million for grants to help individuals and their caregivers better understand and navigate their health and long-term care options. The Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will work collaboratively to award funds for an integrated approach that focuses on the unique needs of seniors, Americans with disabilities and their caregivers as they seek health care and long-term care. AoA and CMS will administer the funding to states and communities through separate announcements, but will coordinate implementation and monitoring through a single process.

These new grants are authorized under Affordable Care Act to help seniors, individuals with disabilities and their families get better quality care and more control. The purpose of this new grant program is to create streamlined, coordinated statewide systems of information, counseling and access that will help people find consumer-friendly answers they seek to meet their health and long-term care needs. Some specific areas of focus will include assisting individuals who are under-served and hard to reach with information about their Medicare and Medicaid benefits, helping older adults and individuals with disabilities live at home or in settings of their choosing with the right supports, assisting people transition from hospital or nursing home stays back into the community and strengthening linkages between the medical and social service systems.

Funds will be available to states, Area Agencies on Aging (AAA's), State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs). Through the grant program, states and local aging and disability programs will receive funds to:

- Provide outreach and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries on their Medicare benefits including prevention;
- Use additional funds through a competitive process to provide Options Counseling on health and long-term care through ADRCs;
- Use additional funds through a competitive process to strengthen the ADRCs role in Money follows the Person program and support state Medicaid agencies as they transition individuals from nursing homes to community-based care; and
- Coordinate and continue to embed tested Care Transition models that integrate the medical and social service systems to help older individuals and those with disabilities remain in their own homes and communities after a hospital, rehabilitation or skilled nursing facility visit.

The deadline for applications is: Friday, July 30, 2010. Grants will be awarded in September 2010. For more information about this grant opportunity, please visit <http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/Grants/Funding/index.aspx> or www.grants.gov. To learn more about the Affordable Care Act, please visit www.healthreform.gov.

HHS Announces Health Reform Money

HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has announced the availability of \$500 million in new funding in the amount of \$250 million provided by the Affordable Care Act to expand the primary health care workforce and \$250 million to support prevention and public health activities (the first payment from the new prevention trust fund). The new funding will help prepare the health system to meet the demand for health care workers as well as in community and clinical prevention, public health infrastructure, research and tracking and public health training. A fact sheet entitled, "Creating Jobs and Increasing the Number of Primary Care Providers", is available and a public health investment fact sheet will be available at www.healthreform.gov.

The White House expects to launch its web portal to the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan on July 1. The Plan is the temporary

high-risk pool established by the new health reform law to be run by the federal government for those states which choose not to run their own programs. The Plan is one of the early benefits of health reform designed to cover those individuals with pre-existing conditions who have not been insured for the six months prior to application. Twenty states have elected to have the U.S. Department of HHS run the high risk pool program in their states: AL, AZ, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IN, KY, LA, MN, MS, NE, NV, ND, SC, TN, TX, VA and WY. (UT and RI are undecided.) HHS has requested more information from the states that have volunteered to run their own pool programs about how they intend to operate them. The temporary high-risk pools will continue until 2014 when access to the health insurance exchanges becomes available. Coverage is intended to begin August 1.

HRSA Committee to Define Medically Underserved Populations

In accordance with the Affordable Care Act, which outlines the process for updating the criteria and methodology that define how Medically Underserved Populations (MUP) and Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas are designated, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is appointing a committee to write regulations to update the definition of "Medically Underserved Populations". The current definition applies only to racial and ethnic populations and people who live in certain geographically defined areas.

Because the disability community is not included, programs and research to provide better medical care to people with disabilities are limited. NASHIA signed on to a letter from the disability community asking HRSA to ensure that the committee includes representatives from the cross-disability community and that people with disabilities are included as people who are medically underserved.

CDC's Disability and Health Initiatives

On May 24th, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) appointed Vincent Campbell, Ph.D. to serve as the first Chief Disability and Health Officer. In addition to Dr. Campbell's new role, CDC has formed the first Disability and Health Work Group to advance the health of people with disabilities. With cross-Agency representation, the work group is focused on incorporating disability status into CDC surveys, showcasing best practices and ensuring relevant issues for people with disabilities are reflected in CDC programs and policies.

For more than 10 years, centers, institute, and offices across CDC have played an integral role in developing the science, evidence base, surveillance systems and programs to support people with disabilities. Language in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act emphasizes the timeliness of CDC addressing the health of people with disabilities, and many of CDC's public health partners support the Agency's ongoing and future work in this area.

Dr. Campbell joined CDC in 1997 as a health scientist in what was then the Office of Disability and Health in the National Center for Environmental Health. Before joining CDC, Dr. Campbell was the Director of Data Analysis and Research with the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and a senior scientist at the Civitan International Research Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He earned his doctorate in educational psychology at the University of Alabama.

CMS Issues Letter on Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration Grants

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services issued a letter to state Medicaid directors on the extension of the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Rebalancing Demonstration. The Affordable Care Act authorized \$450 million per year through fiscal year 2016 to maintain the MFP rebalancing demonstration grant program. MFP began in 2005 to increase the use of home and community based services (HCBS). Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have implemented MFP demonstration projects, bringing approximately 6,000 people out of institutions. With the extension of the program, additional states are able to start MFP demonstration projects, and the existing states will be able to seamlessly transition into the next five years. The extension of the program also changes the definition of individuals eligible to participate in MFP. Instead of having resided in an institution for more than 6 months, individuals are eligible for MFP after residing in an institution for more than 90 days.

Enacted by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, the MFP Rebalancing Demonstration is part of a comprehensive, coordinated strategy to assist states, in collaboration with stakeholders, to make widespread changes to their long-term care support systems.

Department of Defense

A New Director is Appointed for DCoE

Army Brig. Gen. Loree Sutton, who ran the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) since it was established in November 2007, left that command on Monday, June 21st. She now works for Army Lt. Gen. Eric

Schoomaker, pending retirement in March 2011. Col. Robert W. Saum, an Army psychologist with a Ph.D. in Cognitive Studies from a dual enrollment at the University of San Francisco and Canterbury University in the United Kingdom, has been appointed as her replacement.

DoD Holds Dedication Ceremony for Intrepid Center on Brain Injury

On June 24th, the Deputy Defense Secretary William J. Lynn III and other officials celebrated the ribbon cutting ceremony for the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), created to diagnose, treat and rehabilitate military with mild TBI and psychological health issues. The \$65 million center is located on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center adjacent to the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. It was built with private funds with assistance from Arnold Fisher who is the honorary chairman of the fund and the force behind the center's conception. Donations to build the center came from 125,000 Americans, who provided donations as small as \$10. When the Intrepid fund appeared to miss its fundraising mark this spring, Bob Barker of "The Price is Right" fame stepped in and donated \$3 million. The project broke ground in December 2008. Dr. James P. Kelly, a neurologist, serves as the director of NICoE.

New Director Appointed for DVBIC

Effective July 1, 2010, COL Jamie B Grimes, USA, MC succeeds Col Michael S Jaffee, USAF, MC as the new National Director of the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC). COL Grimes comes to DVBIC headquarters from San Antonio, TX where, since 2007, she has been the DVBIC Site Director at Wilford Hall Medical Center (WHMC) and Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), now combined as the San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC).

In her new role, COL Grimes will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the organization's mission: to serve active-duty military and veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) through state-of-the-art medical care and care coordination, and innovative clinical research initiatives and educational programs.

DVBIC Offers New Guide for Caregivers

The Department of Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center has announced the availability of the "Traumatic Brain Injury: A Guide for Caregivers of Service Members and Veterans". This program is designed to provide information about traumatic brain injury, including the causes, symptoms and diagnosis. Treatment, recovery and strategies for preventing future injuries to the brain are also covered. A downloadable version of the TBI Family Caregiver Guide is now available online at <http://www.traumaticbraininjuryatoz.org/Caregiver-s-Journey/Family-Caregiver-Curriculum-Downloads.aspx> and at www.DVBIC.org. A multimedia component to the curriculum will be posted on CEMM's site in July.

DCoE Celebrates 1 Year Anniversary of Real Warriors Campaign

In May, the DCoE celebrated the one-year anniversary of DCoE's Real Warriors Campaign, which is combating the stigma associated with seeking psychological health care and TBI. At the heart of the campaign are the stories of Real Warriors who are proving through example that seeking care is a sign of strength. To visit the campaign's Web site, go to www.realwarriors.net, to see the most recent of Real Warriors and their families.

As part of the Real Warriors Campaign, 11 PSAs have been produced and aired more than 25,000 times, reaching 1.3 million warriors in 177 countries, on Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) each week. When the campaign launched, it had already engaged 24 partners and the Web site included four PSAs and three profiles. The campaign now has nearly 100 partners and the list continues to grow as the campaign builds relationships with DoD and non-profit organizations. NASHIA is a partnering agency. For more information about campaign partners, please visit www.realwarriors.net/partner.

On the campaign Web site, visitors will find more than 40 practical articles for those serving on active duty, members of the National Guard and Reserve, veterans, military families and health professionals. More articles are added each week, so check the site frequently for new information. To view campaign materials, including fact sheets, PSAs and posters, visit www.realwarriors.net/materials. The Web site also includes a live chat function that will connect those in need with health resource consultants having a master's degree or higher level of education, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The campaign also has message boards, where visitors can connect with one another directly.

Department of Education

OSERS Reviews States Requests to Waiver State Maintenance of Effort

Four states have recently submitted requests for a waiver of the maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The MOE prevents states from reducing the state and local government's share of IDEA funding, and can only be waived in exceptional circumstances. If a waiver is granted, the statute contains several protections to ensure that appropriate services continue to be provided for children with disabilities. Thus, a state must continue to ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to all children with disabilities residing in that state. Further, if the department grants a waiver, the amount of financial support required of the state in future years is the same amount that would have been required in the absence of the waiver.

The U.S. Department of Education reviews waiver requests on a case-by-case basis with regard to a number of important factors as outlined in a June memorandum that can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/moe-waivers.pdf>. The Department has approved MOE waivers for Kansas and Iowa; and requests have been submitted by South Carolina and West Virginia that are still under review. Part C of IDEA does not allow for such waivers.

Other

Alliance Issues New Brief on Children's Health Care

The Alliance for Health Reform has released a new issue brief entitled, "The Future of Children's Health Coverage". The brief discusses details of the Affordable Care Act, including mandatory Medicaid coverage for some children ages six to 19, requirements regarding the Children's Health Insurance Program, potential problems for state Medicaid programs as reform is implemented and the current state of children's coverage. The brief is available at www.allhealth.org/publications/Child_health_insurance/The_Future_of_Childrens_Health_Coverage_98.pdf.

Foundation Publishes State Health and Demographic Information

The Kaiser Family Foundation's State Health Facts page (<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/>) has been updated to include new user-friendly tools. The website provides state-by-state and national data on more than 700 demographic, health, and health policy topics, and allows users to make customized comparisons of health data between states or the nation as a whole.

This *Capitol News* was prepared by Susan L. Vaughn, Director of Public Policy, pubicpolicy@nashia.org. William A.B. Ditto, MSW, is Chair of the NASHIA Public Policy Committee.

The National Association of State Head Injury Administrators assists State government in promoting partnerships and building systems to meet the needs of individuals with brain injuries and their families.

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