



National Association
OF
State Head Injury Administrators

Action Alert! – Urgent Appropriations Alert

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March 8, 2007

Don't Forget Brain Injury Awareness Month Fair on Capitol Hill March 13th!

Greetings NASHIA Members:

The Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, co-chaired by Reps. Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) and Todd Platts (R-PA), is circulating a "Dear Colleague" letter to ask members of the House of Representatives to sign on to a letter to the Chair and Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education requesting them to appropriate \$30 million total for the TBI Act programs. The TBI Act authorizes funding to the US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to administer the Federal TBI Program which provides state grants to improve access to service delivery and to state Protection & Advocacy Systems to expand advocacy services for individuals with TBI. In addition, the TBI Act authorizes funding to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for surveillance, public education and prevention activities.

ACTION: Contact your US Representatives and urge them to sign onto the Congressional letter to House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education Chair and Ranking Member to fund TBI Act Programs at \$30 million in the FY 2008 Labor-HHS spending bill. (Find a copy of the letter at <http://www.nashia.org/pdf/fy2008tbitacappropssignonltr.pdf>.) The letter is being circulated in the US House of Reps. by Representatives Pascrell (D-NJ) and Platts (R-PA). (See talking points at the end of this memo). **Deadline is March 15, 2007.** Congressional members may contact Charla Penn McManus (Rep. Pascrell's office) at 5-5751 or Becky Braunstein (Rep. Platts' office) at 5-5836.

The Congressional Brain Injury Task Force, co-chaired by Reps. Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) and Todd Platts (R-PA), is also circulating a "Dear Colleague" letter to ask members of the House of Representatives to sign on to a letter requesting that the **House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense Chair and Ranking Member appropriate \$19.5 million for the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC)**. The DVBIC serves active duty military, their dependents and veterans with TBI through multi-sites and partnership with the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Administration and a civilian partner.

ACTION: Contact your US Representatives and urge them to sign onto the Congressional letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense Chair and Ranking Member to fund DVBIC programs at \$19.5 million in the FY 2008 Department of Defense spending bill. (Find a copy of the letter at <http://www.nashia.org/pdf/fy2008dvbictfsignonltr.pdf>.) The letter is being circulated in the US House of Representatives by Reps. Pascrell (D-NJ) and Platts (R-PA). **Deadline is March 15, 2007.** Congressional members may contact Charla Penn McManus (Rep. Pascrell's office) at 5-5751 or Becky Braunstein (Rep. Platts' office) at 5-5836.

To identify your Congressmen/women and their contact information, visit <http://www.congress.org> and enter your zip code. You can send an email or fax containing the

message below. The most effective way is to call them directly. Call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for the Member's office and then, ask for staff who handle appropriations or health issues and military (Department of Defense) issues.

MESSAGE for TBI Act Program Appropriations for FY 2008:

Please have Congressman _____ sign onto the letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education Chair and Ranking Member requesting full funding for the TBI Act Programs at **\$30 million** in the FY 2008 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill. The letter is being circulated by Representatives Pascrell (D-NJ) and Platts (R-PA).

TALKING POINTS:

- The TBI Act is the *only* Federal program focused on issues faced by individuals with traumatic brain injury and their families; and is the *only* Federal program assisting States to address these unique and complex service needs.
- Increased funding is needed for the HRSA Federal TBI Grant Program to restore State grants to at least the level awarded in 1997 (\$200,000).
- The Institute of Medicine (IOM) report noted the strength of the HRSA Federal TBI Program in enabling States to leverage other funding resources, as well as to maximize resources across State systems to better serve and coordinate services.
- The IOM evaluation also noted that the program is administered by less than a skeletal staff, and that increased funding is needed to support administration staff and infrastructure to effectively administer and systemically review the program, and to provide national leadership and resources on the special and complex needs of individuals with traumatic brain injury.
- The HRSA Federal TBI Grant Program affords people with traumatic brain injury protection and advocacy (P&A) services to help them to access services, make sure their legal and human rights are protected and to make sure they are free from abuse and neglect.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as the result of the funding, obtains much needed data on incidence and prevalence of traumatic brain injury to help States and the Federal government plan for services and develop prevention strategies.
- While much work has been done in developing service delivery (cite examples that are pertinent in your State), there are still gaps in service delivery that present hardships on individuals with TBI and the family that make it difficult for individuals to live and work in the community without supports (cite specific gaps in your State and how that impacts the lives of individuals and their families).

MESSAGE for DVBIC Appropriations for FY 2008:

Please have Congressman _____ sign onto the letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense Chair and Ranking Member requesting funding for the **DVBIC at \$19.5 million** in the FY 08 Department of Defense appropriations bill. The letter is being circulated by Reps. Pascrell (D-NJ) and Platts (R-PA).

TALKING POINTS:

- Traumatic brain injury (TBI) has become the signature wound of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. TBI is a complex condition that requires a full spectrum of specialized care.
- Since 1992, the DVBIC (formerly the Defense and Veterans Head Injury Program), has coordinated care for our troops from the battlefield to the community.
- The numbers of injured troops with TBI is higher than ever expected. Service personnel are not just sustaining severe TBIs, but also through the concussive forces of IEDs which are not always apparent.
- More effort needs to be put towards evaluating our troops and identifying their injuries earlier so specialized care can be coordinated.

Brain Injury Awareness Events -- March 13th

As a reminder, the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force is hosting the "2007 Brain Injury Awareness Month Fair on Capitol Hill" on Tuesday, March 13, 2007. NASHIA will exhibit information at the Fair and will have at its exhibit table legislative packets that NASHIA members may use to leave with their representatives and senators. You may pick them up there or you may download information from the NASHIA website: <http://www.nashia.org/>. Events include:

**10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. -- Brain Injury Awareness Fair
in the Rayburn House Office Building Foyer**

**4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. -- "TBI: The Signature Wound of the War on Terrorism." A Roundtable
discussion on: The Challenges of Meeting the Needs of Service Personnel Returning to Their
Communities
418 Russell Senate Office Building**

**6:00 p.m. -- 8:00 p.m. -- Reception Celebrating Brain Injury Awareness Month.
418 Russell Senate Office Building, Office B**

*This **Action Alert** was prepared for NASHIA members by Susan L. Vaughn, Director of Public Policy, on behalf of the NASHIA Public Policy Committee, chaired by Debra Kamen. To see NASHIA's Public Policy Platform click on www.nashia.org.*

NASHIA is assisting State government in promoting partnerships and building systems to meet the needs of individuals with traumatic brain injury and their families.