



National Association  
OF  
State Head Injury Administrators

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## Action Alert!

### URGENT APPROPRIATIONS ALERT

Greetings NASHIA Member:

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-Health and Human Services (HHS)-Education is expected to markup the spending bill for FY '09 for Labor, Health and Human Services and Education departments **June 19 with the full Appropriations Committee on June 25**. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education is marking up its version **June 23**. It is time to call or e-mail your representative and senators regarding funding for the TBI Act programs.

#### WHY YOUR CALL IS NECESSARY:

The President's budget calls for elimination of the HRSA Federal TBI Program! At the same time, the President just signed the legislation reauthorizing the TBI Act programs through 2012.

**ACTION:** Please call **800-965-4701** and ask to be connected to your Representative/Senator(s). Tell the staffer who answers: "Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_, a constituent of Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_. **Please tell him/her to support the TBI Act Programs in the amount of \$30 million in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.** I am asking his/her support in the amount of \$15 million for HRSA TBI State Grant Program, the only federal program helping states to develop and improve services desperately needed by individuals with traumatic brain injury and their families. I also urge that \$6 million be appropriated to HRSA Protection & Advocacy Grant Program to help individuals to access these systems through advocacy. \$9 million is needed for the CDC TBI Program to provide public education, surveillance and supports prevention activities. This funding is critical to the citizens with traumatic brain injury and their families in this district and state."

To identify your congressman/woman or senator and his/her contact information, visit [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org) and enter your zip code. You can send an email or fax containing some of the talking points listed below. The most effective way is to call them directly. You may call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for the Member's office. Then, ask to speak to the staff member who handles appropriations or health care or disability issues.

#### 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).
- Last year's Institute of Medicine (IOM) evaluation report noted the strength of the HRSA Federal TBI Program is 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).
- TBI is also becoming the signature wound of the Iraq War as a growing number of soldiers are suffering from blast injuries. Initially, brain injuries may go undiagnosed when there are other physical combat injuries present only to be discovered later.

**Please forward this message to everyone you know.**

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*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 <http://www.nashia.org/pdf/publicpolicyplatform.pdf>.*

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