



4330 East West Highway

Suite 301

Bethesda, MD 20814

301-656-3500

Action Alert! – Urgent Appropriations Alert

October 30, 2007

Greetings NASHIA Members:

The full Senate passed its annual appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (H.R. 3043) on October 22. The Senate approved a **\$1.090 million increase** - a total of \$10 million - for the **HRSA Federal TBI Program** (State Grant and P&A Grant Programs) and a **\$1 million increase for the CDC TBI Programs**. Both of these amounts are higher than what the House recommended. (The House recommended level funding for the HRSA Federal TBI Program (\$8.91 million) and an increase of around \$500,000 for CDC.) During Senate floor debate, an amendment offered by Senator Reed (D-RI) to provide **\$3 million** to Department of Health and Humans Services **for trauma systems** was accepted. The House bill includes no funding for trauma systems despite re-authorization of Title XII earlier this year.

Also, during Senate floor debate, Sen. Evan Bayh (D-IN) offered an amendment, that was adopted, that added **\$900,000** to the Department of Education, NIDRR, for **TBI Model Systems**. The House did not provide for an increase.

What's next? Members of the House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittees are now meeting to reconcile differences in the House and Senate versions of the bill. November 1 is the target date for holding the House-Senate conference, with the conference report going to the House and Senate floors the week of November 5. We now need everyone's help to keep the \$1 million for the HRSA TBI Program; \$1 million for CDC TBI Prevention Programs; \$3 million for trauma care; and \$900,000 for the NIDRR TBI Model Systems Program in the final bill.

The Congressional Brain Injury Task Force is circulating a "dear colleague" letter to support the senate recommendations with regard to the TBI Act programs and the NIDRR TBI Model Systems. However, there is not much time to get a lot of signatures.

Action: Please contact your representatives to ask they sign on to the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force letter by contacting Charla Penn McManus in Congressman Pascrell's office at (202) 225-5751 or Becky Braunstein in Congressman Todd Platts' office at (202) 225-5836. In addition, please contact your representative urging them to support the Senate position on the Labor-HHS-Education bill with regard to the TBI Act programs, trauma care and TBI Model Systems. Call **800-965-4701 to be connected to your representative.**

TALKING POINTS:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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).

*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>.*

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