



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE HEAD INJURY
ADMINISTRATORS**

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
H.R. 2992, the TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act**

**Submitted by the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators to the
U.S. House Committee on Judiciary**

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

On behalf of the National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA), we submit the following statement for the record in support of H.R. 2992, the “TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act.” As a nonprofit member organization representing brain injury state government programs, we appreciate the need for training and coordination of resources at the state and local level to help identify individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) who are at risk of or are involved with law enforcement due to their behavioral and cognitive disabilities that contribute to poor reasoning, decision making, judgment, impulse control and inappropriate behavior. Alcohol and drug use may also contribute to unwanted behaviors. Once a first responder is called, individuals with TBI may have difficulty in understanding and following directions or controlling their inappropriate behavior or speech.

As TBI-related symptoms are also similar to other conditions -- such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), intellectual disabilities, and mental health disorders -- being able to discern factors contributing to situations prompting the need for first responders will help those who respond with being able to communicate with the individual, avoid unnecessary escalation of a situation, and help to obtain appropriate resources and assistance. In many states, the brain injury program housed in state health, mental health, vocational rehabilitation, Medicaid, and education agencies offers training and local resources to address behavioral, cognitive and physical disabilities associated with TBI. As a national organization, we would be happy to assist in any way to make those connections.

We also support the provision that directs the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to implement concussion data collection and analysis to determine the prevalence and incidence of concussion among first responders. TBI poses a significant hazard for law enforcement personnel that may be attributed to falls, blows to the head, and vehicle crashes. Often concussions or mild TBI go unnoticed, yet result in cognitive and other problems that need to be identified and treated. The data should help with better understanding of the extent and cause of TBI among first responders.

For over thirty years, NASHIA has been the only national organization to offer states a learning forum and other opportunities to promote partnerships and build systems to meet the needs of individuals with brain injury across the lifespan. We partner with a number of federal agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Injury Center and the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Administration for Community Living (ACL), to promote awareness, education, and training.

In closing, we strongly support training efforts among first responders to better assist them with their responsibilities and to help those persons with TBI to obtain the resources they need to address their TBI-related disabilities that may contribute to the situation prompting the need for a first responder.

Should you wish additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Wolfkiel, Executive Director, at 202-681-7840 (execdirector@nashia.org) or Zaida Ricker, NASHIA Governmental Relations Consultant at zricker@ridgepolicygroup.com.

Thank you for your continued support.