



June 30, 2017

**Legislative Activities:**

NASW staff have continued to work on introducing a companion bill to ***H.R. 1290-Improving Access to Mental Health Act*** in the Senate. Currently, ***H.R.1290, the Improving Access to Mental Health Act*** has 13 cosponsors. A full list of cosponsors can be found [here](#). For more information on ***H.R. 1290, the Improving Access to Mental Health Act*** please visit our website [here](#).

NASW is actively engaged with our congressional champions to gain support for both [H.R. 1289, Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr., Social Work Reinvestment Act](#) and [H.R.1484, Social Worker Safety Act of 2017](#). NASW staff met with members of Congress offices serving on the committee of jurisdiction, Education and the Workforce, to gain additional cosponsors for H.R. 1484. We have been focusing on all Committee members, with particular attention to GOP offices. Through our collective efforts this month, we are pleased to report that a new cosponsor was added to H.R. 1484; Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH-01) In addition, NASW staff has been working with Senate offices to secure original cosponsors to introduce the companion bills in the Senate.

On May 23, 2017, the President submitted his FY 2018 Budget request to Congress. NASW opposes many components of the budget and released an opposition statement detailing how [President Trump's full budget request would "shred" nation's social safety net](#). The President's budget is not binding. Congress will have to pass Appropriations bills for FY 2018 and do not have to follow the President's budget request.

On Thursday, June 22, 2017, Senate Republicans introduced the Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA) with the hopes of voting on it before the July 4<sup>th</sup> recess. Senate Republicans were not able to secure the 50 votes needed to pass the legislation and have delayed a vote on the bill until after the July 4<sup>th</sup> recess.

NASW sent out an [Action Alert](#) to the Advocacy Listserv opposing the bill in its current form. NASW staff attended a [Protect Our Care Rally](#) on June 21, 2017 in advance of the release of the bill.

**Get involved!** You can join [NASW's Advocacy Listserv](#) to stay up to date on Congressional activity. We also have [resources](#) on our web page to help in setting up visits with your members of Congress. You may want to check out the information on the [Indivisible Guide](#). It is a guide created by former Congressional staffers to reveal best practices for making Congress listen.

**Congressional Briefing, *Preventing Child Maltreatment of Infants from the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU): Strengthening Maternal-Child Bonds***: On June 27, 2017, NASW and the Council on Social Work Education hosted a briefing and panel discussion that identified strategies to prevent child maltreatment of infants from the NICU. The Congressional briefing enhanced awareness about NICU families and reviewed solutions that address their unique needs and promote positive parenting outcomes.

#### **Judicial Activities:**

NASW staff attended a weekly meeting of the Judicial Nominations Coalition. The meeting is coordinated by the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. It includes a diverse group of more than 50 organizations. The current and continuing concern is the number of vacancies on in the federal judiciary, especially at the Circuit Court of Appeals level, that President Trump will be able to appoint. These appointments are critical to court decisions that impact voting rights, immigration, women's rights, health care, and other social justice/human rights concerns. The coalition also includes a Courts Matter component that advocates at the state level for appointment of moderate judges to the federal bench.

Staff attended a strategy meeting on responding to two pending nominations to the Circuit Court of Appeals – who are of particular concern for the civil and human rights community. The two are Judge John K. Bush and Judge Damien M. Schiff whose views are far right.

#### **Coalition Activities:**

**Blueprint to reduce malnutrition in older adults released**: NASW is among the Malnutrition Quality Collaborative members that developed the recently released [National Blueprint: Achieving Quality Malnutrition Care for Older Adults](#). This publication presents an overview of malnutrition among older adults and outlines strategies and tactics that various stakeholders, including federal, state, and local governments and the social work profession, can implement to prevent and care for older adult malnutrition in acute, post-acute, and community settings.

NASW staff participate in weekly calls of the **Families USA Protect Our Care Coalition** and monthly meetings of the **Medicaid Coalition** to coordinate advocacy efforts to preserve the ACA and Medicaid.

On June 2, 2017, staff participated in a **meeting on Integrated Care at the American Psychological Association (APA)**. APA has received a Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative (TCPI) Support and Alignment Network (SAN) 2.0 grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The grant supports the creation of training material on behavioral health integration in primary care and advance

value-based payment models over the next three years. APA also aims to enroll 4,000 providers- including clinical social workers- into their resource network.

On June 5, 2017, NASW staff participated in the Voting Rights Task Force, of which NASW is a member. This monthly meeting was chaired by Vanita Gupta- the new CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. The Task Force is developing strategies for combatting voter suppression and promoting greater voter participation from communities of color, young people and marginalized populations.

On June 12, 2017, NASW staff attended a meeting of the National Criminal Justice Association, organizations that focus on law enforcement, criminal justice and correctional policy and Department of Justice policies as well as legislation. NASW is a regular attendee and has a leadership role with the coalition. The meeting earlier this month featured a presentation from representatives from the Senate Judiciary Committee's leadership on the future of criminal justice legislation as a priority for this legislative calendar. The consensus is that there is a likelihood of a criminal justice reform bill that will be introduced toward the end of the calendar year.

On June 13, 2017, NASW Social Justice staff attended and participated in the Justice Roundtable's Quarterly Assembly. The Roundtable included a participatory discussion on the direction of criminal justice reform. NASW reported on the concerns for the loss of Medicaid coverage for justice involved men and women, especially for behavioral health services. NASW staff was asked to take the lead on developing a statement for the Justice Roundtable Coalition on the issue of Medicaid and ACA repeal.

NASW staff is a participating member of the Drug Policy Working group which is a sub-set of the Justice Roundtable. The key issues of this working group are the establishment of the new White House Opioid Commission and getting clarity about its make-up and mission. The Drug Policy Working Group is also developing plans to meet with the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

NASW participated in coalition work with:

- Leadership Council of Aging Organizations
- Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
- Coalition on Human Needs
- Mental Health Liaison Group
- National Coalition to End Child Abuse Deaths
- National Child Abuse Coalition
- Protect Our Care Coalition
- Eldercare Workforce Alliance
- Elder Justice Coordinating Council (observer)
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Third Global Summit
- Medicaid Coalition

**Internal Efforts:**

**New NASW Practice Perspectives, Perinatal Social Work in Health Care Settings:** The Guidelines for Perinatal Social Work Practice in Health Care Settings adapts the NASW Standards for Social Work

Practice in Health Settings and applies it to the specialty of perinatal practice. The guidelines provide the reader with information about the types of issues that perinatal social workers address and the typical work settings for perinatal social workers.

On June 1, 2017, 14 students and two faculty members from Tulsa Community College visited NASW to learn about our NASW membership, our activities in health care, professional development, advocacy and political action. Staff discussed health care reform as well as Social Worker Safety (H.R. 1484), the Improving Access to Mental Health Act (H.R. 1290), and the Social Work Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1289).

On June 8, 2017, 11 students and two faculty members from Simmons College visited NASW. They had a panel of presenters, including NASW staff, who discussed health care, the Affordable Care Act or its recommended replacement, Medicaid, Medicare and Health Disparities. The panelists reflected on their careers and professional development as professional social workers. This is part of a week-long course in Washington, DC.

On June 22, 2017, 21 students and two faculty members from Western Carolina University visited NASW to learn about NASW, women's issues, health care issues, advocacy and political action. They are undergraduate students, some in social work and some in other disciplines. Their visit was part of a two-week trip to Washington, DC.

### **Support Letters:**

NASW has signed onto a number of letters of support. You can find a list of letters of support on our [web page](#). A sample of recent letters is listed below.

- [NASW signs onto MHLG letter opposing capping Medicaid \(06/23/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs onto MHLG letter supporting the Medicaid CARE Act \(06/22/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to Leadership Council of Aging Organizations \(LCAO\) letter expressing opposition to provisions in the House-passed American Health Care Act that would harm older adults and urging the Senate to reject these proposals in its health reform bill \(6/21/2017\)](#)
- [NASW joins the Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, along with 148 other organizations, to oppose the repeal of the Affordable Care Act; oppose Medicaid Block Grants/Per Capita Caps; and to defund Planned Parenthood from being defunded. \(06/14/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to LCAO letters supporting the Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017 in the Senate \(S. 670\) and the House \(H.R. 1652\) \(6/13/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to letter to the House Appropriations subcommittee, encouraging funding for the Food and Drug Administration's oversight of tobacco products in Fiscal Year 2018 to be maintained \(6/13/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to letter to the Senate Appropriations subcommittee, encouraging funding for the Food and Drug Administration's oversight of tobacco products in Fiscal Year 2018 to be maintained \(6/13/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter supporting fiscal year 2018 appropriations for the Lifespan Respite Care Program and the National Family Caregiver Support Program \(6/9/2017\)](#)

- [NASW joins MHLG letter to Senator Hatch, Finance Committee Chair, expressing serious concerns about the American Health Care Act \(05/23/2017\)](#)
- [NASW joins 100 members of the Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights expressing our profound concern that the civil and human rights of all Americans are being drastically undermined by the Trump administration proposed deep cuts to key federal civil rights office budgets. \(06/05/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging Senate leaders to oppose provisions in the American Health Care Act that would undermine Medicare's financing and decrease access to care for Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries \(05/22/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter supporting introduction of the Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act in the Senate and the House \(05/18/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to letter to protect access to Non-Emergency Medical Transportation \(NEMT\) \(5/18/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging the Senate to preserve the Prevention and Public Health Fund within health care reform efforts \(05/17/17\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to letter to support making Veterans Health Administration facilities smoke-free \(5/11/17\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to letter to Congress requesting level funding for Title II-A of the Every Student Succeeds Act \(5/10/17\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter supporting the reintroduction of the RAISE Family Caregivers Act in the Senate \(05/08/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs onto letter requesting increased funding for domestic discretionary programs in the 302\(b\) allocation for Fiscal Year 2018 \(05/08/2017\)](#)

NASW has also submitted its own comments to the Administration and Congress. You can find this list on our [web page](#) as well.

- **NASW submits comments on federal principles addressing serious illness:** The Administration for Community Living created a draft version of *Principles for a Person-Centered Approach to Serious or Advanced Illness* to guide and enhance programs and services for people with disabilities and older adults. Read [NASW's comments](#) on the draft principles.
- **NASW advocates for LGBT older adults using Older Americans Act services:** The Administration for Community Living (ACL) issued a **notice** proposing to eliminate data collection on sexual orientation and gender identity within the **2017 National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants**. Read [NASW's comments](#) opposing the proposal.