



February 26, 2018

Legislative Activities:

Bi-cameral Budget Deal: In the early morning hours of Friday, February 9, by a vote in the Senate of 71-28 and 240-186 in the House, Congress passed and the President signed a bipartisan budget deal. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018:

- Increases federal spending by about \$400 billion and outlines two-year spending cap levels;
- Creates another six-week continuing resolution (CR) - funding the government until March 23 – with the hope that Congress can rally around a Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Omnibus spending package;
- Raises the Debt Limit through March 1, 2019;
- Adds \$89.3 billion in disaster aid;
- Extends Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for four more years. This combined with the January continuing resolution means CHIP has been reauthorized for 10 years!;
- Prioritizes Mental Health and Addiction Treatment;
- Funds Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program through FY22;
- Slight funding increase and two-year extension of Community Health Centers;
- Two-year extension of the National Health Service Corps; and
- Addresses a number of outstanding Medicare provisions and other legislative priorities.

President’s FY19 Budget: On February 12, the President released his FY2019 budget request. The budget request seeks to cut \$3 trillion in spending over 10 years. Meanwhile, the White House requested \$3 billion in new opioid funding for the remainder of 2018 and \$10 billion in new funding for 2019. On the education front, the President’s Budget eliminates the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. NASW staff actively participates in coalition Hill visits to protect the PSLF program. Keep in mind that while the President’s budget is a blueprint of the Administrations priorities, it normally falls

on deaf ears in Congress. NASW will continue to monitor the budgetary process as Congress considers FY18 and FY19 federal funding levels.

Key NASW Legislation:

We have another cosponsor for ***H.R. 1290-Improving Access to Mental Health Act!*** On February 8, 2018, Rep. Gerald Connolly (D-VA-11) became the 15th co-sponsor of H.R. 1290! NASW hopes to build on this momentum and continues to work on a Senate companion bill. For more information on ***H.R. 1290-Improving Access to Mental Health Act***, please visit our website [here](#).

The NASW [action alert](#) for ***H.R. 1484 the Social Worker Safety Act of 2017*** is still active. Thank you for your advocacy efforts and we look forward to continued outreach as we work to gain additional cosponsors to this vital piece of legislation. A full list of current cosponsors for H.R. 1484 can be found [here](#).

NASW continues to push for support of ***H.R. 1289, Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr., Social Work Reinvestment Act***, which currently has **19 cosponsors**.

NASW Grieves for Families of Florida School Shooting and Urges the President and Congress to Declare Gun Violence a Public Health Crisis: On February 16, NASW released a [statement](#) in response to the deadly shootings in Parkland, Florida. NASW will continue to work to find solutions to the gun violence epidemic in our country.

NASW Provides Background Information on the Impact of the Opioid Crisis on Children and Families to Senate Committee

The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) held a hearing on February 8th exploring the “impact of the Opioid Crisis on Children and Families.” NASW’s CEO, Angelo McClain participated in a conference call with lead HELP Committee staff prior to the hearing to discuss how social workers are on the frontlines of the opioid crisis in an array settings from health care, to mental health, to child welfare, providing critical prevention and intervention services for substance-exposed infants and their families. Dr. McClain provided a written statement with more background information to the Committee and pledged NASW’s ongoing support as policy makers address the opioid epidemic.

H.R. 620 - ADA Education and Reform Act: NASW mobilized its Advocacy Listserv in opposition to H.R. 620, the ADA Education and Reform Act. This bill would remove any consequence for businesses with architectural barriers that violate the ADA unless and until a person with a disability provides them with a legal notice detailing how the business has violated the law. After that, the person with a disability would have to wait for six months or more for the business to fix the problem. Further, businesses would no longer have to provide access but only to make “progress.” Nearly 1,000 individuals made phone calls or sent emails to their Representatives to urge a no vote on the legislation. While this bill, unfortunately, passed the House on February 15, there is no companion bill in the Senate. NASW will continue to monitor and if Senate action occurs we will mobilize our Advocacy Listserv again.

NASW supports Geriatrics Workforce and Caregiver Enhancement Act; grassroots advocacy needed:

The [Geriatrics Workforce and Caregiver Enhancement Act](#) (H.R. 3713) establishes formal funding for the [Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program](#) (GWEP), the only federally funded program to enhance workforce capacity in aging. H.R. 3713 also reestablishes the Geriatric Academic Career Awards (GACA) program, a previously funded program for developing academic clinical educators specializing in aging. All social work practitioners and students are eligible for training through GWEP (available at [44 sites in 29 states](#)), and clinical social workers are eligible for GACA.

The Eldercare Workforce Alliance (EWA), of which NASW is a member, worked with Representatives Janice Schakowsky (D-IL-09), Doris Matsui (D-CA-06), and David B. McKinley (R-WV-01) to introduce the bill. In late January NASW sent a [letter of support](#) to the original bill sponsors. Use NASW's [advocacy alert](#) to urge your Congressional representative to support H.R. 3713 today.

Immigration Task Force: NASW social justice staff participates in the Immigration Task Force's ongoing outreach campaign to Congress to garner support for the passage of a "clean" *Dream Act*. NASW staff also participates in weekly meetings, which includes reports from key immigration reform organizations and updates on the possibility of a Dreamers/Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) bill being passed by the March 5, 2018 deadline. NASW will continue to support this effort along with finding a permanent DACA solution.

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. For best practices on Congressional outreach, check out the [Indivisible Guide](#).

Coalition and Collaborative Activities:

Public service announcement reframes elder abuse as a social justice issue:

Use this brief new [video](#), developed by the [FrameWorks Institute](#) and the [National Center on Elder Abuse](#) (NCEA) to communicate feasible systemic solutions to preventing and addressing elder abuse. The video is based on the FrameWorks Institute's reframing elder abuse [research](#) and [recommendations](#). NASW provided input on the reframing elder abuse strategy as a member of the Reframing Elder Abuse Committee; the association also serves on the NCEA Advisory Board. An in-depth exploration of the reframing elder abuse strategy and application will be the focus of a preconference workshop at the [2018 NASW National Conference, Shaping Tomorrow Together](#).

The reframing elder abuse work undertaken by the FrameWorks Institute is a project sponsored by the Archstone Foundation, the John A. Hartford Foundation, and Grantmakers in Aging, and in partnership with the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California.

NASW is an affiliate member of The Medical Society Consortium on Climate & Health, a group of 20 medical societies and 24 health and science based affiliate organizations that are aligned on advancing climate change solutions. The Consortium is hosting the [Climate & Health Solutions Conference](#) in Arlington, Virginia on April 9-10 and the event is free of charge. The Conference sessions will present updates on: climate change health impacts (including: air pollution, adverse childhood events, and the

Lancet Count Down), reducing the carbon footprint of the health sector, policy solutions to climate change, and how to communicate with policymakers on climate/health. Visits to Congressional Offices will be available on the afternoon of April 10. The agenda and registration are available here: <https://medsocietiesforclimatehealth.org/annual-meeting/>

Eldercare Workforce Alliance presents Award of Honor to Representative Janice Schakowsky(D-IL-09):

In December the Eldercare Workforce Alliance (EWA), of which NASW is a member, recognized Congressional Representative Janice Schakowsky (D-IL-09) with an Award of Honor for her decades of leadership and commitment to strengthening the eldercare workforce. Most recently, Rep. Schakowsky demonstrated that leadership by introducing the bipartisan Geriatrics Workforce and Caregiver Enhancement Act (H.R. 3713), which NASW supports. NASW Illinois Chapter member Robyn Golden, who has worked with Rep. Schakowsky for years and is, herself, a strong advocate for the eldercare workforce and for older adults, presented the award on behalf of EWA.

CHAMPS (Children Need Amazing Parents): On January 31, 2018, NASW staff attended an event-announcing CHAMPS, a new campaign to ensure bright futures for kids in foster care. CHAMPS is a national campaign to ensure bright futures for kids in foster care by promoting the highest quality parenting. CHAMPS builds on research and experience showing that loving, supportive families—whether birth, kin, foster, or adoptive—are critical to the healthy development of children. This event highlighted state partner efforts to implement research-based, cost-effective policies that will bring positive changes to the lives of children in foster care. For more information about this initiative visit: <http://fosteringchamps.org/>

National Child Abuse Coalition: On February 8, 2018, NASW Staff attended National Child Abuse Coalition meeting. The discussion included updates on national organizations participating in legislative advocacy or education on child abuse and neglect issues and discussion of the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) as it may come up for reauthorization.

Families USA Protect Our Care Coalition: NASW is an active member of Families USA Protect Our Care Coalition and participates in weekly conference calls to protect access to health insurance coverage and health services.

On Feb 12 and 13, 2018, NASW staff attended a workshop “Physician- Assisted Death: Scanning the Landscape and Potential Approaches” at the National Academics of Sciences, which explored practice and policy implications.

State Issues Working Group meeting: On January 10, 2018, NASW staff attended the monthly State Issues Working Group meeting, which is a part of the Justice Roundtable Coalition. The State Issues Working Group deals with criminal and juvenile justice issues from a state perspective. The concerns discussed in this meeting had to do with the bail reform movement. Central to bail reform is socioeconomic and racial disparities in granting bail. Bail policy is primarily a state issue. Therefore, this is of interest to NASW chapters, as well as, the national office. Bail reform is emerging as a major national criminal justice priority.

NASW was invited to participate in a two-day roundtable discussion – **Course Corrections: National Summit on Mental Health and Criminal Justice Law and Policy** – on mental health treatment and policy needs in the nation’s prisons and jails. The event was held at Georgetown University. Attendees included leading corrections officials, mental health provider associations, mental health advocacy organizations, and criminal justice policy organizations. A report of recommendations made by attendees will be disseminated shortly.

Crimmigration Working Group meeting: NASW staff participated in the monthly Crimmigration Working Group meeting. Crimmigration deals with the intersection of immigration reform and criminal justice reform. The issues include ICE apprehension and detention of undocumented immigrants; due process for detained immigrants, and impact of detention and apprehension on immigrant families- especially children. This is a regular policy and legislative planning and advocacy meeting.

NASW participated in meetings of the following coalitions or other external initiatives:

- Eldercare Workforce Alliance
- 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
- Medicaid Coalition
- Center for Excellence in Assisted Living
- National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging

NASW Resources

Updated flyer highlights aging-related resources throughout NASW

Use this handy tool to find resources throughout NASW that can enhance your work in aging. Pass on the flyer to social work colleagues, staff, and students to inform them about NASW's aging-related products and services.

Items of Note

Get on the cutting edge of elder abuse research and conversation

Learn about and help to propel the field of elder justice by joining activists, caregivers, lawmakers, researchers, thought leaders, and other stakeholders at the [USC Judith D. Tamkin International Symposium on Elder Abuse](#) in Pasadena, California, on March 1 and 2. The symposium is planned by the University of Southern California Center on Elder Mistreatment in collaboration with the USC Keck

School of Medicine; the Keck School runs the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), and NASW serves on the NCEA advisory board. Social work CE credits are not available for this program.

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 on to CARA 2.0 Policy Solutions for the Chronic Pain and Opioid Misuse Crises \(2/13/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs onto Letter Encouraging Congress to Fund the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grants \(2/1/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs onto MHLG Letter Supporting the Behavioral Health Coverage Transparency Act of 2018, S. 2301 \(1/26/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs onto MHLG Letter Supporting the Behavioral Health Coverage Transparency Act of 2018, H.R. 4778 \(1/26/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs onto NDD United Letter asking Congress to use Parity in Sequester Relief \(1/24/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to Leadership Council of Aging Organizations letter advocating for various Medicare and Medicaid provisions within health extenders legislation \(1/24/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to Letter Supporting Hearings to Assess and Address the Ongoing Education and Health Crisis in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands \(1/23/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging Senate and House majority and minority leaders to pass the Beneficiary Enrollment Notification and Eligibility Simplification \(BENES\) Act \(S. 1909/H.R. 2575\) by the end of the calendar year \(12/19/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to implement the October 2016 final rule for long-term care facilities in a timely manner \(11/16/2017\)](#)

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

- [NASW sends letter of support for the Geriatrics Workforce and Caregiver Enhancement Act \(H.R. 3713\) \(Jan. 31, 2018\)](#)