



OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND POLITICAL ACTION
END OF YEAR REPORT 2008

110TH CONGRESS

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SOCIAL WORK REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE

Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act, H.R. 5447 and S. 2858

The goal of the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative is to secure federal and state investments in professional social work to enhance societal well-being. The Action Network for Social Work Education and Research (ANSWER) Coalition is coordinating efforts to recruit new social workers, retain current social workers, and promote social work research.

The ANSWER Coalition successfully oversaw the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative, including a comprehensive piece of legislation aimed at the recruitment and retention of professional social workers. On February 14, 2008, the “[Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act](#)” was introduced in the House of Representatives (H.R. 5447) by fellow social worker, Rep. Edolphus Towns (D-NY). On April 15, 2008— World Social Work Day—Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), also a social worker, introduced the legislation in the Senate (S. 2858), with bipartisan support in both chambers.

This historic legislation would create a Social Work Reinvestment Commission to provide a comprehensive analysis of current trends within the academic and professional social work communities. Specifically, the Commission would address the future of the profession by developing long-term recommendations and strategies to maximize the ability of America’s social workers to serve clients with expertise and care. Demonstration programs would address the current state of the profession by awarding competitive grants in the areas of workplace improvements, research, education, training, and community based programs of excellence.

Social workers across the country responded with a tremendous grassroots effort. At the end of the 110th Congress, 23,434 Senate and 29,585 House letters, postcards, and e-mails were delivered in support of the legislation. NASW Executive Director Betsy Clark also created her [first video advocacy message](#), encouraging all Association members to contact their members of Congress in support of the legislation. This video has been viewed more than 10,000 times. Additional video advocacy messages were created with [Laura Groshong](#), government relations director of the Clinical Social Work Association and [Jeane Anastas](#), ANSWER Coalition convener.

The legislation gained considerable traction in the House Subcommittee on Healthy Families and Communities, where the first-ever congressional hearing on the profession of social work occurred on July 29, 2008. Entitled “[Caring for the Vulnerable: The State of Social Work in America](#),” the hearing included testimony from former NASW President Gary Bailey on an overview of the profession, and also from current NASW New Hampshire President Dr. Rene Bergeron on social work research.

Additionally, Dr. Robin Mama spoke about social work education; Michael Bird discussed diversity in the profession; Adina Fuller spoke about direct service; and Rev. Sarah Wells discussed faith-based services. NASW, together with the Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research (IASWR) and the Clinical Social Work Association (CSWA), submitted written remarks. The hearing proceedings and written testimony are available at <http://edlabor.house.gov/hearings/hfc-2008-07-29.shtml>

The Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act ended the year with 82 cosponsors in the House and 14 in the Senate, including every social worker in congress and President-elect Obama. Next Congress, NASW will continue to work with its members, sister social work and allied organizations, and schools of social work to ensure that the legislation becomes law.

Furthermore, all 56 NASW chapters have implemented [state level reinvestment plans](#). These plans address a broad range of state issues, including:

- Private and public insurance reimbursement
- Title protection
- Scope of practice
- Public education
- Compensation
- Training
- Recruitment
- Loan forgiveness

Each plan uniquely reflects the professional and political environment in the state. Chapters have utilized lobby days, political rallies, conference workshops, and speakers to enhance and communicate their reinvestment messages. The following are just a few of the many successful efforts:

- *New York* doubled funding for loan forgiveness
- *Pennsylvania* and *Florida* passed title protection legislation
- *South Dakota* may soon establish the state's *first* MSW program
- *Oregon* completed a statewide workforce survey and analyzed results to determine the future path of the profession

Impressively, NASW's chapters have not only been outstanding within their own states, but have also worked hard at the grassroots level to ensure passage of the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act.

Another critical component of the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative was FY09 Labor-Health and Human Services, Education appropriations report language. NASW will continue to promote inclusion of this language in the 111th Congress. The language outlined the necessity of a Social Work Reinvestment Commission within the Department of Health and Human Services; the importance of social work research at the National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute; and the role of social work at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

All components of the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative will continue to be a primary focus of NASW during the 111th Congress.

Teri Zenner Social Worker Safety Act, H.R. 2165

The Teri Zenner Social Worker Safety Act would establish a grant program to assist in the provision of safety measures to protect social workers and other professionals who work with at-risk populations. NASW worked throughout the year to obtain additional sponsors in the House and to find a Senate sponsor.

NASW ACTION

NASW staff sought a Senate sponsor for the social worker safety companion bill, and continued to work with the House sponsor to garner additional co-sponsors.

National Center for Social Work Research Act, S. 106

National Center for Social Work Research Act would amend the Public Health Service Act to establish the National Center for Social Work Research as an agency of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct, support, and disseminate targeted research on social work methods and outcomes related to problems of significant social concern.

NASW ACTION

NASW is continued to meet the Senate sponsor of the bill to garner support for social work research. NASW staff sought a House sponsor for the social work research companion bill. The bill will be reintroduced in the 111th Congress.

AGING

Elder Justice Act, S. 1070 and H.R. 1783

Elder Justice Act would enhance the social security of the Nation by ensuring adequate public-private infrastructure and by preventing, detecting, treating, intervening in, and prosecuting elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

NASW ACTION

NASW participated in meetings of the Elder Justice Coalition, and signed support letters for the legislation.

Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act, S. 2641 and H.R. 5799

Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act would improve the transparency of information on skilled nursing facilities and nursing facilities would clarify and improve targeting of the enforcement of requirements with respect to such facilities.

NASW ACTION

NASW joined the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations in signing a support letter for the legislation. NASW also participated in various meetings and briefings with the nursing home community.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Child Welfare, H.R. 6893, (Public Law 110-351)

On October 7, the president signed into law the “Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act” (H.R. 6893), which Congress passed on September 17, 2008. This law targets specific deficiencies in the child welfare system, and addresses some of the most important needs affecting foster children in America today, including:

- Extending federal foster care payments up to 21 years old
- Providing federal support for relatives caring for foster children
- Increasing access to foster care and adoption services to Native American tribes
- Improving the oversight of the health and education needs of children in foster care.

NASW ACTION

NASW actively advocated to congress on this issue through direct lobbying and grassroots mobilization. We also partnered with the Children’s Defense Fund, and pressed for the increased training funds included in the bill for child welfare workers in private agencies.

Medicaid, H.R. 1376

Congress considered the Medicaid Foster Care Coverage Act of 2007 (H.R. 1376), which addressed ways to provide Medicaid coverage for youths who exit the foster care system without permanent family units.

Currently, 25,000 youths age out of the foster care system every year. Because of inadequate health insurance, they often have a variety of unaddressed medical conditions and other challenges. These challenges may include mental and physical disabilities that can result in a lack of educational achievement and financial instability. Some of these youths become homeless.

Beyond funding the direct provision of basic physical health care services, Medicaid currently allows states to provide critical rehabilitative, therapeutic, psychiatric, and targeted case management (TCM)

services to children in foster care. Such programs and funding are essential to ensure that children in foster care receive the necessary physical and mental health supports while in protective custody.

The [Medicaid Foster Care Coverage Act of 2007](#), introduced by Rep. Dennis Cardoza (D-CA) on March 7, 2007, would help foster care youths access much needed health care. The bill ended the session in the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, referred to the House Subcommittee on Health with 22 cosponsors.

NASW ACTION

NASW urged Congress to pass this legislation, which could significantly improve the lives and outcomes for youth in foster care, meeting with numerous key Hill staff on this issue. We mobilized our members to contact their members of congress. The alert is available at

<http://capwiz.com/socialworkers/issues/alert/?alertid=10542426>.

School Social Work, S. 3364 and H.R. 6654

Sen. Blanche Lincoln introduced the “Increased Student Achievement Through Increased Student Support Act” (S. 3364); Rep. Towns introduced its companion bill, H.R. 6654, in the House. This legislation would create a better trained and prepared school social work workforce to address the psychosocial and emotional issues that can impede educational performance.

Our nation currently faces a serious shortage of qualified school-employed professionals, putting students with issues that interfere with learning at greater risk for school failure. The “Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act” sought to address this shortage. By creating a pipeline between institutions of higher education and low-income school districts, it created a federal grant program designed to increase the number of school social workers, school counselors, and school psychologists serving low-income local educational agencies (LEAs).

In the proposed legislation, institutions of higher education with graduate training programs in school social work, school counseling, and school psychology, and that develop collaborative training and placement partnerships with LEAs, would be eligible to apply for federal grant funds to hire and pay participating graduates to work in those schools. Program participants who remained employed in low-income school settings for a minimum of five years would be eligible for loan forgiveness. By expanding the number of school social workers in low-income, high-need schools, we could increase the likelihood of academic and life success for students throughout the country.

NASW ACTION

NASW staff spearheaded a workgroup of experts in the field of early childhood education, and partnered with Rep. Town’s office to develop the conceptual framework of the bill. At the end of the 110th Congress there were 50 cosponsors in the House and six in the Senate. It is expected that this legislation will be reintroduced in the 111th Congress and NASW will work with allied groups to secure passage.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act (Hate Crimes), H.R. 1592

Hate Crimes legislation continuously receives bipartisan majority support in both the House and Senate since its original introduction in 1997.

Of particular interest to the NASW social justice community was a provision contained within the final version of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act (Public Law 110–315), which required the Department of Education to collect campus hate crime categories identical to the categories collected by the F.B.I. since 1991.

President Bush signed Public Law 110–315 on August 14, 2008. The law redresses the prior deficiency by mandating improved hate crime data collection, as well as reporting. This essential component would give students and parents a comprehensive picture concerning campus safety, in addition to addressing substantial gaps in the hate crimes data promulgated by the Office of Postsecondary Education (Department of Education). Every year, numerous students are the victims of bias-induced slurs, vandalism, threats, and physical assaults on college campuses.

NASW ACTION

NASW and other national organizations were strongly committed to the revision in the Department of Education’s hate crime categories ensuring that they would parallel those collected by the Department of Justice. The Association contends that hate-motivated crimes instill fear and serve as a catalyst that marginalizes innocent people from society.

NASW—in collaboration with coalition groups like the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the NAACP, the National Urban League, the National Puerto Rican Coalition, and the American Association of University Women—worked diligently to alleviate any discrepancies between the F.B.I. definition of a hate crime and the HEA (Higher Education Act) definition. Moreover, our efforts and those of other coalition partners resulted in the subsequent addition of omitted crime categories to the Department of Education’s hate crime data collection mandate.

End Racial Profiling Act H.R. 4611 and S. 2481

The End Racial Profiling Act sought to eliminate discriminatory law enforcement procedures that rely solely upon race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion as criteria for subjecting an individual to routine or spontaneous investigatory activities. The End Racial Profiling Act would provide an opportunity for any violation of such to be reported and investigated by an established review board in a systematic and timely fashion.

The act of racial profiling is a distinct violation of the 14th Amendment, as it subjects individuals to unlawful searches, seizures, and other investigative procedures based on inequitable measures. These actions deprive individuals of their rights to life, liberty, and property without due process of law. The End Racial Profiling Act is critical to the restoration of impartial governance and unbiased treatment rendered by federal, state, and local law enforcers.

NASW ACTION

NASW continued its work with nationally recognized civil rights entities, such as the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the National Urban League to secure enactment of this initiative. The Association contacted and met with vital staff personnel representing the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

In the Senate, NASW partnered with external entities in meeting with staff members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Through these efforts, cosponsorship rose to 66 in the House of Representatives and 13 in the Senate. Further, Government Relations staff drafted letters, issued alerts, and devised legislative strategy concerning this important initiative. In seeking bipartisan endorsement for this legislation, NASW engaged more than 75 congressional members.

The Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007, H.R. 923 (Public Law 110–344)

Introduced by Rep. John Lewis (D-GA.) on February 8, 2007, H.R. 923 was passed by congress on September 24, 2008. On October 7, 2008 President Bush signed The Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–344) into law.

Public Law 110–344 calls for expeditious investigation of unresolved civil rights murders and provides exhaustive resources for the facilitation of those investigations. This law’s explicit purpose will be to conduct thorough investigations and prosecutions of criminal offenses, up to and including death, involving civil rights. These unsolved offenses are retroactive to December 31, 1969. Further, the law will allot human and fiscal resources for the years 2008—2017.

NASW ACTION

NASW staff worked with civil rights coalitions pursuing enactment of The Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act of 2007. For many Americans, civil rights are of profound importance. Thus, the dispensation of justice concerning civil rights has a direct impact on protections throughout society. The Association advocated before Republicans and Democrats seeking common ground on this relevant initiative. In addition, NASW attended lobby days and legislative strategy sessions pursuant to the legislation.

All Americans should consider Public Law 110–344 as an instrument of justice and the embodiment of equity, as well as impartiality. The Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Act of 2007 will safeguard the rights and liberties of marginalized communities. Additionally, it holds violators of these acts accountable for their behavior. We believe that Public Law 110–344 can help foster a national environment of justice, equity, and liberty.

HEALTH

Michelle's Law, S.400 and H.R. 2851, (Public Law 110-381)

Michelle's Law would ensure that college students who take medically necessary leave of absence are eligible to maintain their health insurance coverage.

NASW ACTION

NASW sent a support letter to the House and Senate sponsors of the bill. NASW advocated for the final passage of the Michelle’s Law. On October 9, President Bush signed this measure into law.

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2007, H.R.493 and S. 358 (Public Law 110-233)

Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2007 prohibits discrimination on the basis of genetic information with respect to health insurance and employment.

NASW ACTION

NASW staff participated in the annual Genetics Hill Day and other coalition meetings of the Genetics Alliance. The Association advocated for the final passage of the GINA legislation, which was signed into law by the president on May 21.

Caring for an Aging America Act of 2008, S. 2708 and H.R. 6337

The Caring for an Aging America Act of 2008 addressed the emerging care gap between the dramatically increasing numbers of older Americans and the serious lack of providers trained in caring for the aging population’s medical, health, and social support needs.

NASW ACTION

NASW worked with the Senate sponsor of the bill on drafting the legislation. In addition, NASW staff helped secure a sponsor for the House companion bill. NASW sent a support letter for the bill. The bill will be reintroduced in the 111th Congress.

United States Health Insurance Act, H.R. 676

United States Health Insurance Act would provide for comprehensive health insurance coverage for all United States residents.

NASW ACTION

NASW staff attended and participated in numerous coalition and Hill meetings and briefings about the bill. NASW staff also met with the House sponsor of the bill. This bill will be reintroduced in the 111th Congress.

Minority Health Improvement and Health Disparity Elimination Act, H.R. 3333 and S. 1576

Minority Health Improvement and Health Disparity Elimination Act would support research, grants, and demonstration projects to improve the health of racial and ethnic minority groups.

NASW ACTION

NASW staff participated in numerous coalition and Hill meetings and briefings about the bill. Congressional leaders intend to include health disparities as a part of the larger discussion on health care reform. This bill will be reintroduced in the 111th Congress.

Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2007, H.R. 3014

Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2007 would support efforts designed to improve the health of minority individuals.

NASW ACTION

NASW staff participated in numerous coalition and Hill meetings and briefings about the bill.

Medicare Hospice Protection Act, S. 3484 and H.R. 6873

Medicare Hospice Protection Act would delay the phase-out of the Medicare hospice budget's neutrality adjustment factor during fiscal year 2009. The hospice payment methodology is set forth in the Medicare statute, and the budget neutrality adjustment factor, in particular, was the product of a careful and deliberate negotiated rule making process and has been an integral part of the hospice wage index for over 10 years.

NASW ACTION

NASW sent support letters to the sponsors of the legislation and an action alert about the legislation. Although the rule took effect on October 1, 2008, NASW is continuing to work with our congressional partners and the hospice community to prevent future rate cuts.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher Education Reauthorization and Opportunity Act, H.R. 4137 (Public Law 110-315)

On July 31, congress passed the Higher Education Reauthorization and Opportunity Act (HEA), which significantly expanded aid for thousands of students pursuing higher education. The vote on the five-year reauthorization was overwhelmingly bipartisan, 380 to 49 in the House and 83 to eight in the Senate.

On August 14, the President signed H. R. 4137 into law. The new law includes loan forgiveness for social workers, mental health professionals, and school counselors, among other professions. In addition, it increases the maximum Pell Grant amounts from \$4,800 to \$6,000 in 2009, and up to \$8,000 in 2014.

The law also:

- Requires the Education Department to publish data about college costs

- Requires universities with the highest tuition increases to submit reports to the agency explaining them
- Requires universities to publish textbooks costs in online catalogues so that students know the true cost of a course
- Simplifies the financial aid forms by cutting an eight page form with 108 questions to a two page form with 44 questions

With respect to the loan forgiveness provisions, the law encourages students to enter public service jobs by authorizing up to \$10,000 in loan forgiveness for child welfare workers, public defenders, prosecutors, firefighters, military service members, first responders, law enforcement officers, educators (including those who focus on early childhood), nurses, and others serving the public interest. Eligible borrowers must be employed full time in an area of national need, and not in default on the loan for which they seek forgiveness.

Child welfare workers who have a degree in social work, or a related field with a focus on serving children and families—and who are employed full time in public or private child welfare services—are eligible. Also eligible are mental health professionals with master’s degrees in social work, psychology, or psychiatry, who service children, adolescents, or veterans.

For each year of full time employment in an area of national need that a borrower completes on or after the law is enacted, \$2,000 of the student loan obligation will be forgiven for up to five years. Therefore, the maximum a borrower could receive is \$10,000. The loan forgiveness provisions will be effective on or after the date of HEA’s enactment; will be available on a first come, first served basis; and will be subject to appropriations.

Go to <http://www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov/> to find out if you qualify for the loan forgiveness provisions. Please note that private loans are ineligible for loan forgiveness, which only applies to federal student loans. The Secretary of Education will have to work out many of the implementation details, such as the definition of “national need” and whether or not previous years’ work will count toward loan forgiveness.

NASW ACTION

For many years, NASW worked to enact student loan forgiveness legislation for social workers. We partnered with the American Bar Association in efforts to ensure the bill’s passage. This law and the enactment in 2007 of the College Cost Reduction Act are important victories for our Social Work Reinvestment Initiative. You can view information on this legislation at:

(<http://www.socialworkers.org/advocacy/updates/2007/092107.asp>).

MENTAL HEALTH

Health Information Technology (HIT) and Personal Privacy, S.1693, H.R. 6898 and H.R. 6357

Health Information Technology legislation is a popular bi-partisan issue. However, in 2008, Congress continued to struggle over whether to include health privacy standards in federal law to promote adoption of IT in health care.

In the Senate, the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee pressed hard all year for floor consideration under unanimous consent. The Committee’s “Wired for Health Care Quality” (S.1693), however, faced strong opposition from our small pro-privacy coalition. While disagreements over privacy delayed House and Senate passage all year, it is widely expected that HIT and privacy provisions will be considered in the health reform legislation now being prepared for consideration early in 2009.

Sponsored by Sens. Kennedy and Enzi, S.1693 would promote HIT as a tool to bring about fundamental change in the health care system. It would also codify the functions of the Office of the National Coordinator of Health Information Technology within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The Senate bill also required the HHS Secretary to establish the public-private “American Health Information Collaborative,” to make recommendations for national policies for the adoption of health information technology. Unfortunately, the bill contained extremely inadequate federal personal health privacy protections. Sen. Snowe’s was the last Senate office late in 2008 still willing to buck the leadership of both parties, seeking additional changes in the bill to improve the privacy protections.

In July, NASW achieved a major victory for privacy advocacy, when a leading House committee added a broad range of personal health privacy requirements in their new legislation, known as the PRO(TECH)T Act, HR. 6357. This bill was introduced in July and quickly passed the House Energy and Commerce Committee, before being significantly rewritten and weakened before the House Ways and Means Committee. The Ways and Means version (H.R. 6898) did not get out of the Committee by the end of the session in 2008. No bill had enough support to reach the House floor.

NASW ACTION

This issue is a major priority for NASW’s Government Relations staff. The Association is working with several other mental health groups to ensure the inclusion of privacy measures in both House and Senate legislation. This work will continue during the 111th Congress.

The mental health coalition is small, and NASW plays a significant role in this effort. Our recent activities included:

- Building coalitions
- Drafting bill language for consideration by key offices
- Making calls to the Hill
- Promoting language to key members of Congress

Medicare Coverage of Clinical Social Work (CSW) Services, H.R. 6331 and S.1212 (Public Law 110-275)

NASW’s advocacy efforts scored a milestone victory in July, when Congress overrode the President’s veto of Medicare legislation (H.R. 6331). This action restored funding for clinical social work payments cut in 2007, and greatly improved coverage of outpatient psychotherapy services.

Mental health advocates—who scored a major victory by expanding coverage under Medicare’s outpatient mental health benefit—were exuberant when Congress finally passed this legislation.

The Medicare package halted a scheduled 10.6 percent cut in all Part B provider payment rates, and made mental health coverage improvements. Firstly, clinical social workers billing Part B would receive an increase in their payment rates for psychotherapy services for the bill’s 18-month duration.

Secondly, mental health coverage for beneficiaries would be improved by a critical Medicare coinsurance parity provision. This provision gradually reduces, over five years, the beneficiary cost sharing amount from the current 50 percent coinsurance rate to 20 percent in 2014. This change reaches full parity with other Medicare outpatient benefits when fully phased in. NASW had long sought this crucial legislative goal.

Unfortunately, a provision permitting clinical social workers to bill Medicare directly for psychotherapy services to Medicare Part A clients residing in skilled nursing facilities was not included in this year's final Medicare bill. Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) remained our lead proponent of the Clinical Social Work Medicare Equity Act (S.1212). In July 2007, the House passed this provision within broader Medicare legislation known as CHAMP. The Finance Committee ultimately dropped it in the final Senate bill.

NASW ACTION

NASW success this year is due to our long-time lobbying efforts and vigorous grassroots mobilization supporting this initiative. In the coming year, coverage of CSW services to nursing home residents will be a high priority. Further, we will seek a long-term correction for CSW payments under Part B, which, without additional congressional action, will fall back to prior lower levels.

Mental Health Services Appropriations

The annual Labor-HHS appropriations bill funding the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) moved slowly through congress this year, leading to enactment of a temporary continuing resolution by Democratic leadership.

The continuing resolution approach allowed reconsideration of funding levels by the more favorably-disposed Obama Administration in January. President Bush's proposed '09 budget for SAMHSA and the for the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) included small cuts, which congressional leaders hope to restore in January 2009, after the new Administration is in place.

NASW ACTION

NASW actively supported funding increases for SAMHSA and other agencies for 2009. We are working with coalition partners in the Mental Health Liaison Group, and NASW staff have made visits to the Hill to support appropriations for the agency.

Medicaid Spending HR 6331 (Public Law 110-275)

This year, the Bush Administration again employed the CMS regulatory process to extract large cuts from federal Medicaid expenditures—particularly those affecting social work services, such as rehabilitative services, targeted case management, and certain school-based services.

NASW vigorously opposed the rules, which were ultimately stopped (temporarily) by congressional action. The House and Senate passed so-called Medicaid moratorium legislation by wide margins and attached it to a supplemental appropriations bill, effectively compelling the President's signature.

NASW ACTION

NASW members were alarmed by these rules and strongly supported our legislative appeals against these cuts. The Association was active in a large coalition that succeeded in getting Congress to bar the CMS rules. NASW is now working with its coalition partners urging the Obama transition team to support a permanent rejection of the Bush Medicaid rules in these areas.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity, S. 558 and H.R. 1424 (Public Law 110-343)

In a major political breakthrough, longstanding political opposition from business leaders and House Republican leaders to mental health parity was finally resolved in 2008. The final Wellstone Mental Health Parity Act was passed in October. NASW and its coalition partners supported parity legislation since the mid-1990s. This is a major breakthrough for our efforts.

Enactment of the new law is critical for many reasons, including strengthening our political position in the health care reform debates that have already begun for 2009.

NASW ACTION

NASW supported passage of full mental health and substance abuse parity in this Congress, in conjunction with the Mental Health Liaison Group and other parity advocates. Advocates are now regrouping to develop an implementation strategy, particularly focused on resistance to the law among smaller size employers. Forthcoming agency regulations on the new law will be an important issue for 2009.

FIELD ORGANIZING

Grassroots Activities

During the year, 21,236 people sent 50,277 e-mails through Capwiz and 22,058 postcards to their congressional representatives. Federal issues that generated the most grassroots efforts included Medicare and the Social Work Reinvestment Initiative. The table below shows the distribution of e-mails by subject area for the quarter.

Subject Area	Number of E-mails	Number of Postcards
Support the Social Work Reinvestment Act	28,761	22,058
Medicare Coverage of Clinical Social Work Services	10,806	
Appropriations Request	2,638	
Compose Your Own Message	2,636	
Stop the Hospice Rate Cuts	1,924	
Support Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act	1,220	
Oppose Conscience Regulations	1,212	
Halt Medicaid Rules	729	
Higher Education Act	240	
Protect Our Nation's Social Workers	88	
Support the Foster Care Medicaid Coverage Act of 2007	23	

Web Site Development

Eighteen alerts and 23 updates were posted to the Web site.

POLITICAL ACTION FOR CANDIDATE ELECTION (PACE)

2008 congressional Endorsements and Contributions and Presidential Election

The National PACE Board of Trustees authorized the endorsement of 239 candidates for federal office in the 2008 election cycle, nearly 90% of whom won. This total includes all endorsements for the White House, Senate, and House of Representatives. Some of these endorsements were accompanied by \$500

checks. PACE also raised money for national and chapter political action committees through “Social Workers for Obama” buttons to NASW members who contributed \$20 or more prior to the November 4 election or those who contributed at least an additional \$5.00 more online after the November election.

Staff sent weekly e-mails to members about the presidential election. Staff also sent endorsement announcements to members by Congressional District. NASW hosted phone banks in September, October, and early November. Volunteers made 2,947 calls. They called members in Minnesota, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Maine, and Colorado.

You can visit the PACE page at www.socialworkers.org/PACE.

NASW LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES CHART

You can find a full list of bills at <https://ssl.capwiz.com/socialworkers/issues/bills/>.

<i>Number and Title</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>	<i>NASW Position</i>	<i>Last Action</i>	<i>Staff Responsible</i>
Aging				
S. 1070 – <u>Elder Justice Act</u>	Sen. Orrin Hatch (UT) Introduced 3/29/2007 Cosponsors (33)	Support	9/18/2008: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 1029.	Asua Ofosu
H.R. 1783 – <u>Elder Justice Act</u>	Rep. Rahm Emmanuel (IL-5) Introduced 3/29/2007 Cosponsors (121)	Support	6/11/2008: Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.	Asua Ofosu
S. 2641 – <u>Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act</u>	Sen. Charles Grassley (IA) Introduced 2/14/2008 Cosponsors (11)	Support	2/14/2008: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.	Asua Ofosu
H.R. 5799 – <u>Nursing Home Transparency and Improvement Act</u>	Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) Introduced 4/15/2008 Cosponsors (1)	Support	4/22/2008: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.	Asua Ofosu
Appropriations/Budget				
S. 1710 – <u>Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies Appropriations</u>	Sen. Tom Harkin (IA) Introduced 6/27/2007 Cosponsors (None)	Support	6/29/2007: Star Print ordered on the bill	
H.R. 3043 – <u>Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act</u>	Rep. David Obey (WI-7) Introduced 7/13/2007 Cosponsors (None)	Support	11/15/2007 Failed of passage in House over veto.	
Children and Families				
H.R. 1376 – <u>Medicaid Foster Care Coverage Act</u>	Rep. Dennis Cardoza (CA-18) Introduced 3/7/2007 Cosponsors (17)	Support	3/8/2007: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health	Nancy McFall Jean
H.R. 6654 – <u>Increased Student Achievement Through Increased Student Support</u>	Rep. Ed Towns (NY-10) Introduced 7/30/2008 Cosponsors (40)	Support	7/30/2008: Referred to House Committee on Education and Labor	Nancy McFall Jean
S. 3364 – <u>Increased Student Achievement Through Increased Student Support</u>	Sen. Blanche Lincoln (AR) Introduced 7/30/2008 Cosponsors (4)	Support	7/30/2008: Referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	Nancy McFall Jean
H.R. 6893 – <u>Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act</u>	Rep. Jim McDermott (WA-7) Introduced 9/15/2008 Cosponsors (2)	Support	10/7/2008: Became Public Law No: 110-351.	Nancy McFall Jean

Civil Rights					
S. 1105 – <u>Matthew Shepard Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act</u>	Sen. Edward Kennedy (MA) Introduced 4/12/2007 Cosponsors (45)	Support	4/12/2007: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary	Lawrence Moore	
H.R. 1592 – <u>Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act</u>	Rep. John Conyers (MI-14) Introduced 3/20/2007 Cosponsors (172)	Support	5/7/2007: Received in the Senate; read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary	Lawrence Moore	
H.R. 4611 – <u>End Racial Profiling Act</u>	Rep. John Conyers (MI-14) Introduced 12/13/2007 Cosponsors (66)	Support	1/14/2008: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security	Lawrence Moore	
S. 2481 – <u>End Racial Profiling Act</u>	Sen. Russ Feingold (WI) Introduced 12/13/2007 Cosponsors (14)	Support	12/13/2007: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary	Lawrence Moore	
H.R. 923 – <u>Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act</u>	Rep. John Lewis (GA-5) Introduced 2/8/2007 Cosponsors (79)	Support	10/7/2008: Became Public Law No: 110–344.	Lawrence Moore	
Health					
H.R. 676 – <u>United States National Health Insurance Act</u>	Rep. John Conyers (MI-14) Introduced 1/24/2007 Cosponsors (91)	Support	2/2/2007: Referred to the Subcommittee on Health	Asua Ofofu	
S. 400 – <u>Michelle’s Law</u>	Sen. John Sununu (NH) Introduced 1/25/2007 Cosponsors (34)	Support	10/9/2008: Became Public Law No: 110–381.	Asua Ofofu	
H.R. 2851 – <u>Michelle’s Law</u>	Rep. Paul Hodes (NH-2) Introduced 6/25/2007 Cosponsors (150)	Support	10/9/2008: Became Public Law No: 110–381.	Asua Ofofu	
H.R. 3333 – <u>Minority Health Improvement and Health Disparity Elimination Act</u>	Rep. Jesse Jackson (IL-2) Introduced 8/2/2007 Cosponsors (69)	Support	8/2/2007: Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.	Asua Ofofu	
S. 1576 – <u>Minority Health Improvement and Health Disparity Elimination Act</u>	Sen. Edward Kennedy (MA) Introduced 6/7/2007 Cosponsors (19)	Support	6/7/2007 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.	Asua Ofofu	
S. 2708 – <u>Caring for an Aging America Act</u>	Sen. Barbara Boxer (CA) Introduced 3/5/2008 Cosponsors (8)	Support	3/5/2008: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	Asua Ofofu	
H.R. 6337 – <u>Caring for an Aging America Act</u>	Rep. Carolyn Kilpatrick (MI-13) Introduced 6/20/2008 Cosponsors (6)	Support	6/20/2008: Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.	Asua Ofofu	

H.R. 3162 – <u>Child Health and Medicare Protection Act</u>	Rep. John Dingell (MI-15) Introduced 7/24/2007 Cosponsors (13)	Support	10/18/2007 Failed of passage in House over veto. Status: On passage, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding Failed by the Yeas and Nays: (2/3 required): 273 – 156 (Roll no. 982).	Jim Finley
H.R. 493 – <u>Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act</u>	Rep. Louise McIntosh Slaughter (NY-28) Introduced 1/16/2007 Cosponsors (226)	Support	05/21/2008: Became Public Law 110-233.	Asua Ofosu
S. 358 – <u>Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act</u>	Sen. Olympia Snowe (ME) Introduced 1/22/2007 Cosponsors (46)	Support	05/21/2008: Became Public Law 110-233.	Asua Ofosu
H.R. 3014 – <u>Health Equity and Accountability Act</u>	Rep. Hilda Solis (CA-32) Introduced 7/12/2007 Cosponsors (111)	Support	06/24/2008: Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Hearings Held.	Asua Ofosu
H.R. 6873 – <u>Medicare Hospice Protection Act</u>	Rep. Chris Van Hollen (MD-8) Introduced 9/11/2008 Cosponsors (87)	Support	9/11/2008: Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.	Asua Ofosu
S. 3484 – <u>Medicare Hospice Protection Act</u>	Sen. Arlen Specter (PA) Introduced 9/12/2008 Cosponsors (35)	Support	9/12/2008: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.	Asua Ofosu
Social Work Reinvestment Initiative (SWRI)				
H.R. 5447 – <u>Social Work Reinvestment Act</u>	Rep. Ed Towns (NY-10) Introduced 2/14/2008 Cosponsors (81)	Support	2/14/2008: Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor	Elizabeth Franklin
S. 2858 – <u>Social Work Reinvestment Act</u>	Sen. Barbara Mikulski (MD) Introduced 4/15/2008 Cosponsors (14)	Support	4/15/2008: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	Elizabeth Franklin
S. 1212 – <u>Clinical Social Work Medicare Equity Act</u>	Sen. Barbara Mikulski (MD) Introduced 4/25/2007 Cosponsors (8)	Support	4/25/2007: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance	Jim Finley
H.R. 6331 - <u>Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act</u>	Rep. Charles Rangel (NY-15) Introduced 6/20/2008 Cosponsors (2)	Support	7/15/2008: Became Public Law 110-275.	Jim Finley
S. 106 – <u>National Center for Social Work Research Act</u>	Sen. Daniel Inouye (HI) Introduced 1/4/2007 Cosponsors (0)	Support	1/4/2007: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	Asua Ofosu
H.R. 2165 – <u>Teri Zenner Social Worker Safety Act</u>	Rep. Dennis Moore (KS-3) Introduced 5/3/2007 Cosponsors (114)	Support	5/03/2007: Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor	Asua Ofosu

SWRI: Loan Forgiveness					
H.R. 4137 – Higher Education Act	Rep. George Miller (CA-7) Introduced 11/9/2007 Cosponsors (30)	Support	8/14/2008: Became Public Law 110–315.	Nancy McFall Jean	
S. 1642 – Higher Education Act	Sen. Edward Kennedy (MA) Introduced 6/18/2007 Cosponsors (10)	Support	8/14/2008: H.R.4137 became Public Law 110–315	Nancy McFall Jean	
H.R. 2669 – Higher Education Act Reauthorization	Rep. George Miller (CA-7) Introduced 6/12/2007 Cosponsors (32)	Support	9/27/2007: Signed by the President	Nancy McFall Jean	
Medicare					
H.R. 1663 – Medicare Mental Health Modernization Act	Rep. Pete Stark (CA13) Introduced 3/23/2007 Cosponsors (54)	Support	4/3/2007: Referred to Subcommittee on Health	Jim Finley	
S. 2785 – Save Medicare Act of 2008	Sen. Debbie Stabenow (MI) Introduced 3/13/2008 Cosponsors (18)	Support	3/13/2008: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance	Jim Finley	
Medicaid					
H.R. 5613 – Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act	Rep. John Dingell (MI-15) Introduced 3/13/2008 Cosponsors (222)	Support	6/30/2008: H.R.2642 , which became Public Law 110–252 on	Jim Finley	
S. 2819 – Economic Recovery in Health Care Act	Sen. John Rockefeller (WV) Introduced 4/3/2008 Cosponsors (37)	Support	4/3/2008: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance	Jim Finley	
Mental Health: Information Technology					
S. 1693 – Wired for Health Care Quality Act	Sen. Edward Kennedy (MA) Introduced 6/26/2007 Cosponsors (16)	Oppose	10/01/2007: By Sen. Kennedy from Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions filed written report. Report No. 110–187	Jim Finley	
H.R. 5442 – TRUST in Health Information Act	Rep. Edward Markey (MA-7) Introduced 2/14/08 Cosponsors (12)	Support	4/17/2008: Referred to House Subcommittee on Health	Jim Finley	
Mental Health: Parity					
S. 558 – Mental Health Parity Act	Sen. Pete Domenici (NM) Introduced 2/12/2007 Cosponsors (58)	Support	10/3/2008: H.R.1424 , which became Public Law 110–343	Jim Finley	
H.R. 1424 – Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act	Rep. Patrick Kennedy (RI-1) Introduced 3/9/2007 Cosponsors (275)	Support	10/3/2008: Became Public Law 110–343	Jim Finley	