



January 24, 2017

Legislative Efforts as the 115th Congress Convenes:

The 115th Congress convened on Tuesday, January 3rd, 2017. As each new legislative session begins, members of Congress host swearing-in ceremonies to meet with key stakeholders. Our very own Angelo McClain, took Capitol Hill by storm and began this year by meeting directly with Republicans, Democrats, and those within Congressional leadership. He had fruitful conversations with dozens of members of Congress about NASW legislative goals, the work social workers do for their clients and communities, and our hope for continued partnerships in the coming year and congressional session.

These efforts go a long way and help pave the path forward for reintroduction and passage of NASW priority legislation. Currently, your NASW National Office is working hard with our Congressional champions to prepare for introduction in the new Congress of NASW supported legislation, including: The Improving Access to Mental Health Act, Social Work Reinvestment Act, and the Social Work Month Resolution. All bills from previous Congresses that were not signed into law, must be introduced again and will receive new bill numbers.

In addition, NASW is also exploring other priority policy issues such as Social Work Safety. Our hope is to have legislation introduced at the federal level this year that specifically addresses safety issues within our profession. Stay tuned!

To supplement legislative efforts, NASW is working with members of Congress to have them join the Congressional Social Work Caucus, and to broaden support for social workers on Capitol Hill. To lead this endeavor, NASW partnered with the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) to welcome all new members and returning members to the 115th Congress, reiterate top priorities, encourage them to join the Social Work Caucus, and offer ourselves as resources in the new term.

While NASW is leading the charge on Capitol Hill, we will need your help this year! Please watch for action alerts and updates on ways you can help advocate for these legislative proposals and help move them forward.

NASW posted an [action alert](#) about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on our web site. In one day, 1,151 advocates contacted 3,578 Members of Congress about the ACA in response to our alert.

If this month is any indication of 2017, your NASW team is full steam ahead to move priorities forward and forge partnership for success.

Administrative Work:

NASW Transition Document: Suggestions for the incoming Administration

NASW compiled a comprehensive transition document for the Trump Administration and the 115th Congress on [Advancing the American Agenda: How the social work profession will help](#). This document outlines many of the priorities and areas where social workers play a significant role in addressing social challenges and advancing the broader American Agenda. This document was delivered to the Trump Transition team for consideration as it prepares for the new president.

NASW Statements on President Trump's Nominations for three Critical Cabinet Posts

Social Justice staff worked with NASW CEO to draft and finalize the organizational position on the nominees for three cabinet secretaries to lead Departments critical to social workers. NASW developed and posted official statements that [opposed confirmation of Senator Jeff Sessions to become Attorney General](#); [opposed Rep. Tom Price's confirmation to become Secretary of Health and Human Services](#), and [withheld support for confirmation of Dr. Ben Carson to become Secretary of Housing and Urban Development](#).

Criminal Justice

During mid-December, as a follow-up to the criminal justice mental health briefing, the American Psychological Association and NASW completed a formal design (with graphics) of the *Consensus Working Group Recommendations to the 115th Congress and the Trump Administration* for wide-dissemination.

On December 8th, social justice staff joined a coalition of solitary reform advocates to meet with the Administrator of the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to discuss progress in creating alternatives to solitary confinement. This was one of a series of ongoing meetings with BOP leadership on this and other BOP issues. Such meetings will continue on a regular basis.

Comments for Nephrology Social Workers

NASW submitted [comments](#) regarding new regulations for nephrology social workers. To remedy unethical practices that steered dialysis clients away from Medicaid and Medicare insurance coverage, social workers will now be required to counsel patients regarding all insurance coverage options. NASW recommends that dialysis facilities evaluate staffing and if needed, increase the number of social work

staff to adequately deliver psychosocial support services and administrative tasks to dialysis clients, as required by CMS.

Coalition Work:

NASW participated in coalition work with:

- Eldercare Workforce Alliance
- Leadership Council of Aging Organizations
- Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
- Coalition on Human Needs
- Mental Health Liaison Group

Civil Rights

On December 7th, along with the NASW CEO, social justice staff attended the annual membership meeting of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, of which NASW is a member. The meeting included a discussion of the civil and human rights agenda for LCCR members during the upcoming 2017 period. It also included a panel discussion from a diverse group of young advocates who discussed the need for coalition building between Latino, Asian, African American, Muslim and LGBTQ millennials to respond to adverse political and policy agendas of the new White House and congressional conservative majority.

Nominations

NASW is also a member of a national coalition concerned with the Sessions nomination and the anticipated nomination to fill the vacant Supreme Court seat. It is expected that this coalition will remain active for many months dealing with the aftermath of the expected confirmation of Sessions and the confirmation fight over President Trump's Supreme Court nominee.

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 from the last few months is listed below.

- [NASW signs on to letter opposing blocking individuals from accessing services at Planned Parenthood \(1/17/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter discouraging Congressional leaders from repealing the Affordable Care Act without a detailed replacement plan that provides equal or improved access to high-quality, affordable health coverage, especially for people with disabilities and older adults \(1/13/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to Federal AIDS Policy Partnership \(FAPP\) Transition Plan for the Trump Administration to End the HIV Epidemic in the United States and Its Territories \(1/11/2017\)](#)

- [NASW signs on to open letter to Congressional leaders supporting the Prevention and Public Health Fund, authorized under the Affordable Care Act \(1/09/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to Global AIDS Policy Partnership \(GAPP\) letter outlining recommendations for global HIV/AIDS priorities for in-coming Trump administration. \(1/06/2017\)](#)
- [NASW signs onto MHLG Letter to Congressional Leaders asking them to preserve access to crucial mental health and substance use disorder services and programs \(01/03/2017\)](#)

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

- [NASW provides comments on interim final rule on Medicare Program: Conditions for Coverage for End-Stage Renal Disease Facilities--Third Party Payment, CMS-3337-IFC \(1/11/2017\)](#)