



August 27, 2018

Legislative Activities:

The House is on its August District Work Period or Recess, so things are a little quieter in Washington, DC. However, the Senate opted to stay in for three weeks in August to continue to advance judicial nominations and FY 19 appropriations bills.

NASW social justice and human rights staff in collaboration with the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (NTF) and the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), is working in support of passage of Representative Sheila Jackson Lee's (D-TX-18) Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA, H.R. 6545). Rep. Lee's bill includes language to curb gun-related intimate partner violence – strengthened protective orders from possessing firearms. This legislation also expands protections for Native American women, improves tribal access to federal crime databases, and affirms tribal criminal jurisdiction over non-Indian perpetrators.

Key NASW Legislation:

We do ask that you continue to advocate for **S. 2613/H.R. 1290- Improving Access to Mental Health Act** by [asking your Senators and Representative to cosponsor today!](#) NASW is working to gain support for the **bipartisan legislation S. 2613 – Improving Access to Mental Health Act** introduced by Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY). S. 2613 is the Senate companion bill to the House version – H.R. 1290 – introduced by Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA-13) last year. A full list of cosponsors in the House can be found [here](#).

Don't forget to also weigh in on [H.R. 1484 the Social Worker Safety Act of 2017](#). This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Rep. Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ-09) with original cosponsor, Rep. Elise Stefanik

(R-NY-21). With the help of your advocacy efforts, we are now up to [5 bipartisan cosponsors](#) for H.R. 1484. We look forward to continuing the momentum for this vital piece of legislation by continuing to add cosponsors.

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](#).

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](#).

Administrative Activities:

NASW participated in a stakeholder conversation with Dr. Elinore McCance-Katz, Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) on August 17. Dr. McCance-Katz is conducting quarterly discussions with stakeholders on policies that affect mental and substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery. The Assistant Secretary provided brief remarks about recent SAMHSA initiatives and took questions from stakeholders related to substance use and mental disorders. She indicated that the next call will likely take place in January.

The Census Task Force is a national coalition of over 100 civil and human rights organizations. The goal of the coalition is to ensure that the 2020 Census is conducted in a fair and inclusive manner. The census can greatly impact marginalized communities such as the homeless and justice involved, communities of color, and immigrant communities. One of the more significant concerns is the planned addition of a "citizenship" question to the 2020 Census. The Constitution explicitly requires that all people are to be counted in a national census every ten years- regardless of citizenship. NASW joined thousands of individuals and organizations in writing [comments](#) to the Commerce Department opposing the inclusion of the "Citizenship" question on the 2020 Census.

NASW responded to the Trump administration's proposed rules change to the Title X program. The rules change is essentially a *gag rule* that would create a major barrier for millions of patients to get birth control or preventive health care from clinics such as those operated by Planned Parenthood – through the Title X program. Planned Parenthood acknowledged NASW's comments opposing the proposed rules changes by posting the following to its web page:

"The [National Association of Social Workers](#) submitted a [comment](#) saying, "our comments are meant to express NASW's vehement opposition to this proposed... It is unclear if HHS has fully evaluated the public health and economic effects of the proposed changes, but the ramifications of these proposed changes to Title X will be everlasting, if enacted."

Coalition and Collaborative Activities:

Use Free Online Video Series to Learn How to Reframe Communication About Elder Abuse
[The National Center on Elder Abuse](#) (NCEA) and the [FrameWorks Institute](#) have created an online video series, "Reframing the Conversation on Elder Abuse," to teach advocates how to communicate

effectively about elder abuse, thereby building support for systemic solutions to the problem. The series provides an oral introduction to material included in the FrameWorks "[Talking Elder Abuse](#)" tool kit; input from NASW, a member of the [Reframing Elder Abuse Committee](#), informed development of the tool kit. Use the coupon code WEAAD2018 to [access the series](#), hosted by the FrameWorks Academy, free of charge until June 15, 2019 (the next World Elder Abuse Awareness Day). CEUs are not provided.

[Join NASW in Celebrating Go4Life Month in September](#)

The Go4Life campaign, created and led by the National Institute on Aging, helps adults 50 years and older to fit exercise and other physical activity into daily life. NASW is a Go4Life Partner. The theme for this year's Go4Life Month, observed in September, is "Get Ready! Get Moving! Go4Life!" Access the Go4Life Month tool kit to find videos, tip sheets, activity ideas, and other resources to plan and promote activities in your organization or community.

[NASW Serves on Advisory Committee to Promote Person-Driven Health Outcomes](#)

Quality measurement is used increasingly to assess the effectiveness of health care delivery. However, few existing quality measures capture the priorities and health goals of individuals served, especially adults with functional limitations and complex health issues. With funding from the John A. Hartford Foundation and the SCAN Foundation, the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) has developed and piloted an approach to measure person-driven outcomes. NASW serves on an advisory committee that will inform NCQA's three-year demonstration to refine this approach. Visit the NCQA Web site to learn more about the initiative.

Use Educational Resources on Aging-Focused Programs to Inform Advocacy

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO), of which NASW is a member, has published two documents to educate the public, advocates, and policymakers regarding aging-focused public programs. A fact sheet on the [Older Americans Act](#) (OAA) describes the services funded by the legislation and recommends ways to strengthen the program. An issue brief on the [Aging Network](#) describes how public and private organizations work together on the federal, state, and local levels (including in tribal communities) to improve the health care of older adults and to reduce health care costs; the issue brief also recommends actions to strengthen health care and social service delivery to older adults. Use these publications to inform your advocacy with, and on behalf of, older adults and family caregivers. Use this NASW [advocacy alert](#) to urge your members of Congress to support the OAA and other aging-focused programs.

NASW is continuing its partnership with the CDC's *Tips From Former Smokers Campaign* to promote tobacco cessation. Find out about state innovations in addressing tobacco use for individuals with behavioral health issues. In this [new resource](#), the CDC takes a deeper dive into successful programs in Oklahoma, Texas, Hawaii, New York.

NASW staff is participating in a coalition to advance the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine consensus study, *Integrating Social Needs Care into the Delivery of Health Care to Improve the Nation's Health*. The National Academies is soliciting public comments to help inform the deliberations of a consensus study committee. Written comments may be sent to socialneedscare@nas.edu and more information is available [here](#).

NASW staff is participating in the National Navigation Roundtable Training & Certification Task Force with the American Cancer Society to advance competencies for Patient Navigation.

NASW staff is participating in work groups to promote comprehensive pain care through the Integrative Pain Care Policy Congress.

NASW is a co-sponsor of the Circle of Life Awards, which honors innovative programs in palliative and end-of-life care. The [2018 Awardees](#) have been announced and were honored at an event in July.

NASW staff will attend the 2018 Health Care Association Forum on August 28 at the Joint Commission.

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

- Eldercare Workforce Alliance
- Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO)
- 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
- Child Welfare and Mental Health Coalition
- National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging
- Capitol Hill briefing on home care for older adults
- LCAO–Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities briefing on paid family and medical leave
- National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (inaugural workshop of the [Committee on Integrating Social Needs Care into the Delivery of Health Care to Improve the Nation's Health](#))
- National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) Advisory Board
- National Council on Aging
- National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
- Reframing Elder Abuse Committee (convened by NCEA)

NASW Resources:

[Help Your Clients Access and Use the New Medicare Card](#)

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is removing Social Security numbers from Medicare cards to protect the identity of beneficiaries. Read this member-only Practice Alert for the latest information about the New Medicare Card initiative and to learn how you can help your clients obtain and use their cards.

Items of Note:

On July 26 the Massachusetts governor, Charlie Baker (R), signed into law [An Act Relative to LGBT Awareness Training for Aging Services Providers](#). This law, which was supported by the NASW Massachusetts Chapter and is the first of its kind in the United States, requires all licensed or state-

funded providers of services to older adults to complete training in how to work effectively with LGBT older adults and how to improve access to services for LGBT older adults and family caregivers. NASW MA Chapter member [Lisa Krinsky](#), LICSW, 2013 winner of the chapter's Beverly Ross Fliegel Social Policy Award and a member of the Massachusetts LGBT Aging Commission, has been advocating for the bill for nearly a decade. Throughout that time, the organization she directs, the LGBT Aging Project (now based at Fenway Health), has been training service providers to enhance culturally competent service provision to LGBT older adults. Krinsky and the LGBT Aging Project are eager to work with the state of Massachusetts to implement the new law.

Support Letters:

NASW has signed onto several 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 letter to the Senate outlining health care considerations in the selection of the next Supreme Court Justice \(8/14/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging CMS to withdraw a proposed rule that would prevent independent home care workers from deducting health care costs, union dues, and training costs from their pay \(8/10/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to Families USA letter asking Congress to oppose cuts to Medicaid or Affordable Care Act protections \(7/12/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar to implement the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage \(RAISE\) Family Caregivers Act in a timely manner \(6/28/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to Leadership Council of Aging Organizations letter urging Senate and House appropriators to support funding for aging-related programs in fiscal year 2019 \(6/22/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter supporting the Concentrating on High-Value Alzheimer's Needs to Get to an End \(CHANGE\) Act in the Senate \(S. 2387\) and the House \(H.R.4957\) \(6/14/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging CMS to oppose Florida's request to eliminate three-month retroactive coverage protection for NASW signs on to open letter urging CMS to oppose Florida's request to eliminate three-month retroactive coverage protection for Medicaid-eligible individuals within its 1115 waiver-eligible individuals within its 1115 waiver \(6/5/2018\)](#)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee leaders to fund the Senior Community Service Employment Program \(SCSEP\) in fiscal year 2019 at the fiscal year 2018 authorized level \(5/31/2018\)](#)

- [NASW signs on to letter with the Campaign for Tobacco- Free Kids Coalition requesting that the House Appropriations Subcommittee maintain adequate funding for the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health for tobacco prevention and cessation efforts](#) (5/24/2018)
- [NASW signs on to letter with the Campaign for Tobacco- Free Kids Coalition requesting that the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee maintain adequate funding for the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health for tobacco prevention and cessation efforts](#) (5/24/2018)
- [NASW signs on to open letter describing how the Federal Communications Commission's proposed changes to the Lifeline discounted phone and broadband program would harm older adults](#) (5/23/2018)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\) to oppose Arizona's request to eliminate three-month retroactive coverage protection for Medicaid-eligible individuals within its 1115 waiver](#) (5/22/2018)
- [NASW signs on to letter to support the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2018](#) (5/15/2018)
- [NASW signs on to open letter urging Congressional appropriators to prioritize funding for housing for older adults with low incomes in fiscal year 2019](#) (5/15/2018)

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 to the Federal Register on proposed major rule changes for Title X Family Planning Program](#) (July 31, 2018)
- [NASW submits comments to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine on the Consensus Study "Integrating Social Needs Care into the Delivery of Health Care to Improve the Nation's Health"](#) (June 22, 2018)