



LEGISLATION FOR NASW'S VIRTUAL CONGRESSIONAL ADVOCACY DAY

Thursday, July 22, 2021
9:00am to 5:00pm ET

The Improving Access to Mental Health Act (S. 870/H.R. 2035). NASW issued an **action alert**.

- » If passed, this legislation will increase the reimbursement rate for clinical social workers (CSWs) in Medicare from 75% to 85% of the physician fee schedule, improve Medicare beneficiaries' access to clinical social work services when residents in skilled nursing facilities and allow CSWs to bill for Health and Behavior Assessment and Intervention (HBAI) services that help clients manage physical health problems.
- » You can find a General Issue Brief, HBAI Issue Brief and FAQ document on our website.
- » There are currently 36 bipartisan cosponsors in the **House** and three in the **Senate**.

The Community-Based Response Act (S. 2046/H.R. 3862).

- » If passed, this legislation will establish a program to assist communities with implementing alternative emergency response models in vulnerable populations to resolve crisis situations that may not require a law enforcement response or situations where a law enforcement response may increase the risk of harm. Specifically, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in consultation with the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Justice, must award grants to eligible partnerships to establish or expand these models. The partnerships must consist of a unit of local or tribal government that is independent of law enforcement agencies and a nonprofit, community-based organization or consortium of such organizations. The partnerships may also include other entities, such as nonprofit or public institutions of higher education and behavioral health organizations.
- » A partnership may use grant funds for a variety of purposes, such as triaging 911 calls to refer certain emergencies to entities other than law enforcement. In awarding these grants, HHS must prioritize partnerships that include community-based organizations that have a record of effectively serving, and are led by members of, vulnerable populations.
- » There is currently one cosponsor in the **House** and three in the **Senate**.

The For the People Act (S. 1).

- » If passed, this legislation will ensure access to the ballot box. Provisions include, but are not limited to:
 - › Create an online voter registration system
 - › Allow same-day voter registration
 - › Offer at least 15 consecutive days of early voting
 - › Place early voting locations near public transportation, must be open 10 hours/day
 - › Automatically register any eligible citizens
 - › Ban discriminatory voter purges
 - › Eliminate burdensome voter ID laws
- » There are currently 48 cosponsors in the **Senate**. The companion bill passed in the **House**.

Extending Telehealth Flexibilities beyond the Public Health Emergency (PHE).

- » Policies shaping the future of telehealth have received significant attention on Capitol Hill, and multiple pieces of legislation have been introduced addressing the future of telehealth in varying respects. NASW will support legislation that extends the use of audio-only telehealth in the least restrictive manner and removes the in-person requirements associated with providing telebehavioral health services. Further, NASW supports payment parity for telehealth services for CSWs as we believe that telebehavioral health should be the same reimbursement as for in-person services.

For more information on the legislation NASW supports, visit our website at socialworkers.org/advocacy.

Participants can use the support button in the Advocacy Associates web portal for assistance during the Advocacy Day.

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