

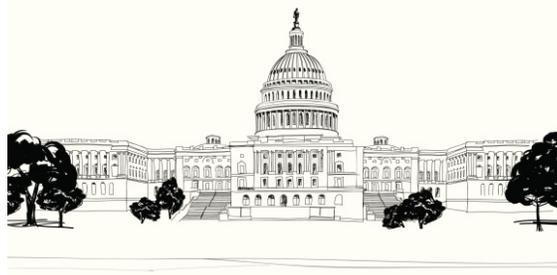


Action Alert!

Congressional Brain Injury Awareness Day! -- March 22

Dear Advocate,

In two weeks, people will be gathering for the annual Congressional Brain Injury Task Awareness Day scheduled for Wed., March 22, 2017, and the pre-meeting hosted by the Administration for Community Living on March 21, 2017, both being held in Washington, D.C. This is a critical time with regard to health care, services and supports for individuals with brain injury. The Awareness Day activities lend itself to learn about national initiatives, but also to be available to meet with Congressional Members in order to educate policymakers about brain injury. If you are planning to attend and wish to arrange Congressional visits, please contact Rebeccah Wolfkiel, NASHIA Government Relations, at rwolfkiel@ridgepolicygroup.com or call her at 202- 480-8901.



Brain Injury Awareness Day on Capitol Hill

sponsored by:

Congressional Brain Injury Task Force
Wednesday, March 22nd, 2017

Brain Injury Awareness Fair

10:00 am -- 2:00 pm

First Floor Foyer of the House Rayburn Office Building

Congressional Briefing

2:30 pm --4:00 pm

Rayburn Gold Room 2168

Faces of Brain Injury: The Invisible Disability Affecting Children and Adults

Panel:

William A.B. Ditto, MSW, NASHIA, Moderator

Grant Baldwin PhD MPH

Director of the Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention

Olivia Lang
Leesburg, VA

James David Toews
Acting Principal Deputy Administrator, Administration for Community Living

Navy Capt. (Dr.) Mike Colston
Director, Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury

Anastasia B. Edmonston, MS CRC
Maryland Department of
Health and Mental Hygiene

Congressional Reception
Celebrating Brain Injury Awareness Month

5:00 - 7:00 pm

B-339, Rayburn House Office Building

Co-sponsored by:



**Friends of Model
Systems**



Congressional Visits

If you plan to be in Washington, D.C., we encourage you to meet with your Representative and Senators. If you do not know who your representative is or who your senators are, you may find that information on the House/Senate websites, type in your zip code, which will link you to your representative for information on his/her office address, phone number and e-mail.

You may also call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for the Member's office. Then, ask to set up a meeting with the staff who handles appropriations or health care or disability issues. Be sure to let them know you are a constituent. And, invite them to the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force Awareness events.

You should schedule appointments 60-90 minutes apart so that you have time to get from one office building to another. To see a map of the key House and Senate buildings click [here](#). Leave plenty of time for security lines and to eat or rest between visits. Remember too, that

Congressional staff may run behind in their appointments.

Contacting Members of Congress:

Remember, when contacting your Representative or Senator to:

1. Identify yourself as a constituent. Explain that you are calling to invite him/her to the Brain Injury Awareness Day Fair activities, and that you are in support of HHS' Administration for Community Living TBI Act program funding. Explain how brain injury affects you. If you have examples of how TBI Act program funding has impacted activities and services in your State, be sure to tell them. Example:



"Hello, I am ____ and I am a constituent of your district/State, and am calling to invite you to the events sponsored by the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force on Wednesday, March 22, 2017. I will be attending the events that day and would like for you to come for some or all of the events, which includes a Fair, Briefing and reception. If you do not have a copy of the agenda, I would be happy to provide to you either now over the phone, or by e-mail or fax. These events will feature best practices in brain injury prevention, research and services and supports offered by federal and State programs. I would like to meet with you specifically to talk about brain injury in our State and leave you resources and contacts so that you may better help constituents who may call you seeking assistance. Also, I would like to talk to you about funding for the TBI Act programs and the importance of federal funding to help us better serve our State's citizens with TBI and their families. Will you have time to attend any of the Awareness Day events and/or meet with me while I am in D.C.?"

2. Say thank you. If you e-mail or fax your representative/senators, be sure to include your name and contact information.

Talking Points:

- * TBI is the signature condition of the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as a growing number of soldiers are suffering from blast and other related injuries. Brain injuries may go undiagnosed or misdiagnosed even when there are other physical combat injuries present. TBI State programs often fill the gaps for information, resources and identification.
- * The TBI Act is the only Federal legislation focused specifically on issues faced by individuals with traumatic brain injury and their families; and is the only Federal program assisting States to address these unique and complex service needs.
- * Increased funding is needed for the HHS ACL Federal TBI State Grant Program to ensure funding for every State, Territory and the District of Columbia. Currently, less than half of the States receive a grant to improve and expand services for individuals with TBI and their families.
- * The HHS ACL Federal TBI Protection and Advocacy Grant Program affords people with traumatic brain injury protection and advocacy (P&A) services to help them to access services, make sure their legal and human rights are protected, and to make sure they are free from abuse and neglect.
- * The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as the result of the TBI Act, obtains much needed data on incidence and prevalence of traumatic brain injury to help States and the federal government plan for services and to develop prevention strategies, such as assistance with return to play guidelines pertaining to sports-related concussions.
- * Funding to the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) supports 16 TBI Model Systems that provides much needed research on best practices and service delivery, now located in the HHS Administration for Community Living.
- * While much work has been done in developing service delivery, there are still gaps in service delivery that present hardships on individuals with TBI and the family that make it difficult for individuals to live and work in the community without supports (CITE EXAMPLES THAT ARE PERTINENT TO YOU)

Note: NASHIA will have materials available for you at its display at the Awareness Day Fair.

Other Tips:

Coordinate with your state BIA affiliate, alliance and other advocates

Since there may be other people from your State planning to attend Awareness Day activities, it is advisable to coordinate with your state Brain Injury Association or Alliance, Protection & Advocacy agency, and any others attending to let them know you've scheduled congressional visits and to coordinate your message accordingly.



Prepare for the appointment

Members of Congress and their staff are very busy. It is important for advocates to tell their story quickly and to make specific requests for improvements in treatment, research and other services for both civilian and military populations. You may use NASHIA materials, and you may want to include materials specific to your State with regard to State brain injury services, Federal grants that you may administer and your State priorities to leave with staff. You may also want to leave a business card or contact(s) on State programs to help them with constituency issues. NASHIA materials may be downloaded from the NASHIA [website](#) and/or stop by the NASHIA exhibit at the Fair to pick up materials.

Directions to House Rayburn Building:

By **taxi**: ask to be taken to the House Rayburn Building, Independence Avenue entrance. This entrance leads to the basement floor. Take stairs directly behind guards to the first floor. Foyer is directly across from staircase.

By **car**: park at Union Station and either cab to the other side of the Capitol or walk across to Independence Avenue. The Rayburn Building is the farthest West of all the Capitol Hill Buildings, between First Street, NW and South Capitol Street, and between Independence Avenue and C Street, SW.

Follow-up after the visit

Once you are back home, please be sure to send a thank-you note to each person/office you visited. Also, please let Susan Vaughn (publicpolicy@nashia.org) and Rebeckah (Becky) Wolfkiel (rwolfkiel@ridgepolicygroup.com) know what was discussed and if follow-up information was requested. Susan and Becky will be available that day to help with any questions you may have or any information you may have learned from your visit. You may also contact Susan prior to the Hill Day if you have any questions.

This Action Alert was prepared by

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The National Association of State Head Injury Administrators assists State government in promoting partnerships and building systems to meet the needs of individuals with brain injuries and their families.

