



# Washington Update!

Special Edition!

March 21, 2013

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### **Legislative Update**

***The House will start the Passover/Easter recess tomorrow, and the Senate leaves the next day. Both will be out all next week. This will be an excellent time while they are in their home districts to talk to your congressional delegation about brain injury issues.***

### **Senate Extends Funding**

Facing a March 27th deadline for when the current Continuing Resolution funding federal government expires, the Senate passed legislation yesterday to continue funding through the end of the fiscal year. The bill includes the \$85 billion in cuts as the result of sequestration for the remainder of FY

**Dear NASHIA member,**

Last Wednesday, March 13th, NASHIA members celebrated Brain Injury Awareness Day activities held in Washington, D.C. A press conference was held announcing the introduction of the TBI reauthorization bill, H.R. 1098, in addition to the Congressional Brain Injury Awareness Day events also held that day. Through Rebecah Wolfkiel's efforts, NASHIA was actively involved in the planning of the Fair, Briefing and Reception. Thanks to all who were there representing NASHIA. It was a great week, with much work yet to do to advance reauthorization legislation and funding for TBI programs! Read further to learn about these events and the reauthorization bill.

## TBI Bill Co-Sponsors Hold Press Conference

On Wed., March 13th, same day as the Awareness Day events, Cong.

Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ), and Cong.

Tom Rooney (R-FL) held a press conference announcing the introduction of the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Reauthorization Act of 2013, H.R. 1098, reauthorizing programs created under the TBI Act of 1996, as amended. Held in the Rayburn House Office



Cong. Tom Rooney (R-FL), CBITF Co-chair

2013. The House is expected to pass the bill before adjourning for recess.

### **President Signs VAWA**

On March 7th, the President signed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) reauthorizing VAWA programs and addressing the criminal justice response to sexual assault, domestic violence homicides, housing needs, and campus victimization. The legislation also included enhanced protections for tribal, LGBT and immigrant victims.

### **H. Committee Approves WIA**

On March 6th, the House Education and the Workforce Committee approved the Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act (H.R. 803), however, the Democratic members walked out. The legislation consolidates 35 federal workforce programs into one Workforce Investment Fund, funded at \$6 billion. Included are job training programs for adults, youth, and displaced workers under the Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, employment and training programs operating through SNAP/food stamps, and others.

Among the changes to existing job training programs is the elimination of the current requirement that local Workforce Investment Boards give priority to services for low-income people.

President Obama Administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) opposing the House bill because of the reduction of assistance to "vulnerable populations", including "veterans, low-income adults, youth, adults with literacy and English language needs, people with disabilities, ex-offenders, and others with significant barriers to employment." The legislation would freeze funding levels for 7 years.

Building Gold Room, press and advocates assembled to hear about the bill.

"Passing the TBI Act will help improve our ability to prevent, detect and treat brain injuries," Rooney said. "By improving coordination across agencies, including the Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs, we can make sure that Americans with brain injuries - particularly our troops and veterans - can access the services they need."

Congressmen Pascrell and Rooney were joined at the press conference by representatives from Brain Injury Association of America, National Association of State Head Injury Administrators and National Disability Rights Network. The press subsequently covered the event in local papers.

### **Associations Exhibit at the Fair**

The Rayburn House Office Building Foyer was the place of action for exhibitors representing national and federal agencies and organizations to promote TBI awareness during the annual Awareness Day Fair sponsored by the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force. Congressional staff used the opportunity to learn more about brain injury.



Rebecca Wolfkiel, NASHIA Governmental Affairs and Susan Vaughn, Director of Public Policy.

Exhibitors represented national organizations, including BIAA, NASHIA and NDRN, and federal agencies including HRSA, NICoE, DVBIC, CDC, NIH, NIDRR Model Systems, US Army, and VA. NASHIA member Bette Beckworth also exhibited featuring work being conducted by state government in Texas on behalf of brain injury.

## CBITF Reception



CBITF Co-chair Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ) reads a proclamation from President Obama proclaiming March as Brain Injury Awareness Month.



Kristin Molloy (middle) Office of Congressman Pascrell, and Drew Shoemaker (not pictured), Office Congressman Rooney planned and coordinated the events.



Amy Colberg, Director of Government Affairs for BIAA. BIAA, NDRN and NASHIA help plan the event.

## Briefing Highlights Private/Public Partnerships



William (Bill) A. B. Ditto, Chair of the NASHIA Public Policy Committee, moderated the Briefing panel consisting of representatives from federal agencies and their private partners to promote brain injury prevention, research and services. Sara Patterson, Centers on Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Injury Center and Katie Clarke Adamson, Director of Health Partnerships and Policy, YMCA, explained their collaborative efforts to promote safety with regard to children's sports.



Col. Jamie Grimes, MD (l), Sara Patterson and Katie Clarke listen as Cong. Pascrell introduces the session.

*Reception sponsors:*

- \* **BHR Pharma, LLC**
- \* **Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA)**
- \* **National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA)**
- \* **National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)**
- \* **Wounded Warrior Project**



For further information on NASHIA public policy go to [www.nashia.org](http://www.nashia.org) or contact Susan Vaughn at [publicpolicy@nashia.org](mailto:publicpolicy@nashia.org)

Other panelists were Col. Jamie Grimes, MD, National Director, DVBIC; Jeff Miller, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs, NFL; Ralph Ibson, National Policy Director, Wounded Warrior Project; and Roland Gerritsen van der Hoop, MD, PhD, Chief Medical Office, BHR Pharma.



Above, left, are Loraine Wargo, RN, Executive Director of NASHIA, Bette Beckworth (TX) and Bill Ditto (NJ). The Rayburn Gold Room was overflowing with the audience.

**March is Brain Injury Awareness Month!**

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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.***

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