



## Washington Update!

**Special Edition!**

**March 19, 2014**

### ***In This Issue***

***Legislative Update***

***CBITF Awareness Day***

***Co-sponsors Announce New Bill***



### ***Legislative Update***

*The House and Senate are both in recess this week and will return next week.*

#### **TBI Act Reauthorization**

H.R. 1098, which reauthorizes TBI Act programs, is waiting to be considered by the full House. Advocates should convey to their Members the importance of getting this bill passed. You may do so by clicking [here](#) to find your representative, then, go to his/her website to write an e-mail. Be sure to include the bill number (H.R. 1098) and reasons why you support the bill.

#### **IDEA Full Funding Act**

On March 5th, Congressmen Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), David McKinley (R-WV), Tim Walz (D-MN), Chris Gibson (R-NY), Jared Huffman (D-CA), and David

Dear Susan,

Last Wednesday, March 12th, NASHIA members and other TBI stakeholders participated in the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force (CBITF) Brain Injury Awareness Day activities held in Washington, D.C. The day consisted of a Fair, Briefing and Reception in honor of the Task Force and in celebration of Brain Injury Awareness Month.

Prior to the Briefing, a Press Conference was held introducing a new bill, H.R. 4251, the "National TBI Research and Treatment Improvement Act of 2014," introduced by CBITF Co-chairs, Congressmen Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ) and Tom Rooney (R-FL). The Briefing and the Press Conference were covered the in Washington Press the following day.

Thanks to all who were there representing NASHIA and to those of you who contributed to the events. It was a great week, with much work yet to do to advance the TBI Act Reauthorization (H.R. 1098); and funding for TBI Act programs and research conducted by NIDRR TBI Model Systems and NIH! Read further to learn about these events.

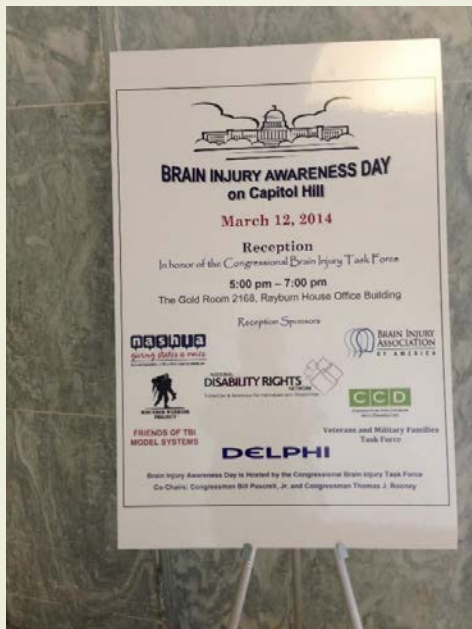
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Reichert (R-WA) introduced the IDEA Full Funding Act, H.R. 4136. The bill would require regular increases in appropriations to meet the funding level originally authorized in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

### Concussion Awareness & Education

At the end of January, Cong. Joyce Beatty (D-OH) introduced H.R. 4251, the Concussion Awareness and Education Act of 2014, to provide for systemic research, surveillance, treatment, prevention, awareness, development of rules of play, standards, and dissemination of information regarding sports-related and other concussions. The bill reflects the recommendations of the earlier IOM report on sports-related concussions.

## CBITF Reception



### Organizations Support Reception in Celebration of Awareness Day

Several organizations, including new ones this year, supported the CBITF Awareness Day Reception. CBITF Co-chair Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ) read a letter from President Obama

## Congressional Brain Injury Awareness Day:

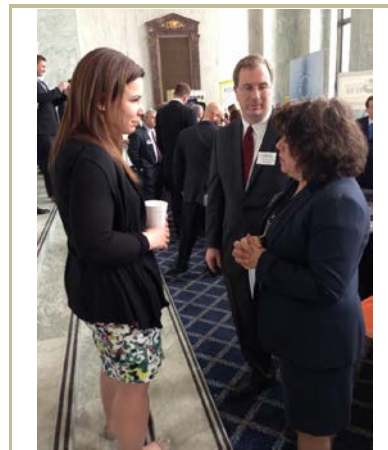
### Exhibitors Showcase TBI Information

An array of organizations and federal agencies participated in the CBITF Awareness Day Fair held in the Rayburn House Office Building Foyer. The Fair was held prior to the Press Conference and Briefing. Many exhibitors were new this year. Congressional staff used the opportunity to learn more about brain injury.



CBITF Co-chair, Cong. Pascrell, Jr., speaks to Fair participants.

Exhibitors included national organizations, including BIAA, NASHIA, USBIA and NDRN; federal agencies including HRSA, NICoE, DVBIC, CDC, NIH, NIDRR TBI Model Systems, US Army, and VA; and private research, rehabilitation and advocacy organizations.



Becky Wolfkiel, NASHIA Government Relations (I), CDC and NDRN.

proclaiming March as Brain Injury Awareness Month as Awareness Day participants and Congressional staffers gathered to network and discuss the day's events.

**Reception sponsors:**

- \* **Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA)**
- \* **Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Veterans and Military Families Task Force (CCD)**
- \* **Delphi Automotive**
- \* **Friends of TBI Model Systems**
- \* **National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA)**
- \* **National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)**
- \* **Wounded Warrior Project**

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**NASHIA Participates in Hill Day**



NASHIA Board Member Stefani O'Dea (l) and Lorraine Wargo, Executive Director, in front of the NASHIA display.

**Co-Sponsors Announce New TBI Bill**

Prior to the CBITF Awareness Day Briefing, Congressmen Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ), and Tom Rooney (R-FL) held a Press Conference announcing the introduction of the "National Traumatic Brain Injury Research and Treatment Improvement Act of 2014", H.R. 4251. The purpose of the bill is to direct the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to establish a national system to track the occurrence of traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and collect data to assist research, prevention and treatment development efforts.



Cong. Rooney speaks about TBI and the proposed legislation.

Congressmen Pascrell and Rooney were joined at the Press Conference by Susan H. Connors, President/CEO of the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA), National Association of State Head Injury Administrators (NASHIA) and Curt Decker, Executive Director of the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN).

Speaking on behalf of NASHIA, Susan Vaughn, Director of Public Policy, thanked the co-chairs for the annual Awareness Day events which are so critical in keeping the complex issues of TBI before policymakers and the public. She said the new bill coupled with the TBI Act Reauthorization would help states with needed data to plan for prevention and service delivery systems that also address emerging populations, such as falls among older adults, military-related TBIs and youth with sports-related concussions.

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**Briefing Focuses on Employment After TBI: Civilians and Military**

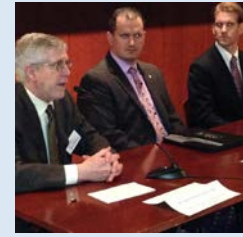
The theme of this year's CBITF Briefing was "Returning to Work: Making Headway After Brain Injury," featuring Sgt. John Irwin, a New Jersey

Although we may not have been strong in numbers, NASHIA staff and members did engage in Hill visits in support of the TBI Act Reauthorization; exhibited information during the Fair; participated in the Press Conference; and attended the Briefing and Reception. Thanks to Rebeccah (Becky) Wolfkiel, NASHIA Government Relations, for her work with setting up the day's events in collaboration with other TBI stakeholders and CBITF staff.



veteran who sustained a brain injury in combat.

Panelists included John O'Neill, Ph.D., CRC, Director, Employment and Disability Research, Kessler Foundation, pictured left; Sgt. Irwin (middle); and Grant Baldwin, Ph.D., M.P.H., Director of the Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention (right). Also presenting were Jim Kelly, M.D., FAAN, Director, National Intrepid Center of Excellence at Walter Reed and Brian Nichols, Manager of Warriors to Work, Wounded Warrior Project.



The panelists discuss the challenges of returning to work after brain injury for civilians, veterans and military returning to duty. Military members emphasized the need for family and community supports to help with rehabilitation and employment success.

Dr. O'Neill believed more research would be beneficial to help determine training programs and strategies that would result in successful outcomes.



The Conference Room in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center is packed for the Press Conference and Briefing. Front, left, is Anne McDonnell, Executive Director of the Brain Injury Association of Virginia.

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)

## March is Brain Injury Awareness Month!

According to the CDC, about 2.4 million Americans seek treatment for a TBI each year as the result of a car crash, fall, sporting injury or other contributing factor resulting in problems with thinking, memory, emotions, language, physical, mobility and sensory, which affects how a person is able to return to school, work, home and community.

NASHIA supports federal policies which result in a coordinated system of care to enable people with TBI to live independent and productive lives.

Save the Date!

**25th Annual State of the States  
in Brain Injury**

**October 27th - 30th, 2014**  
Marriott Courtyard  
21 N. Juniper Street  
Philadelphia, PA



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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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