

DC Update August 3, 2009

The U.S. House of Representatives and Senate will recess the month of August and return after the Labor Day holiday. The House departed Friday, July 31 after the Energy and Commerce Committee passed their provisions of the health reform legislation. The Senate will be in session this week and scheduled to leave town August 7th. Health reform will continue to be top on the agenda along with FY 2010 appropriations when Congress convenes in September. Below are more details on both issues.

Health Reform

U.S. House of Representatives

Late Friday, House Energy and Commerce Committee passed their provisions of the House health reform legislation. After a short hiatus last week, negotiations among Democrat leaders and Blue Dogs produced a compromise to move ahead. Over the recess leaders will work on melding the three committees' work into one bill that will go to the House floor; expected to get underway in mid-September.

U.S. Senate

The Senate Finance Committee has not released their health reform bill and has indicated that it will not be produced prior to the August recess. Chairman, Max Baucus (D-MT) has been working with committee members to draft a bi-partisan bill. Below is a list of committee members that are working to craft the bill.

Look for future DC Updates as details of the House bill and introduction of the Finance bill become available. NACBHDD urges members to contact both their Representative and Senators during the August break and ask that issues and/or provisions affecting individuals with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses and substances use disorders be fully considered as health reform moves forward.

Democrats	REPUBLICANS
MAX BAUCUS, MT JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV, WV KENT CONRAD, ND JEFF BINGAMAN, NM JOHN F. KERRY, MA BLANCHE L. LINCOLN, AR	CHUCK GRASSLEY, IA ORRIN G. HATCH, UT OLYMPIA J. SNOWE, ME JON KYL, AZ JIM BUNNING, KY MIKE CRAPO, ID

[RON WYDEN, OR](#)
[CHARLES E. SCHUMER, NY](#)
[DEBBIE STABENOW, MI](#)
[MARIA CANTWELL, WA](#)
[BILL NELSON, FL](#)
[ROBERT MENENDEZ, NJ](#)
[THOMAS CARPER, DE](#)

[PAT ROBERTS, KS](#)
[JOHN ENSIGN, NV](#)
[MIKE ENZI, WY](#)
[JOHN CORNYN, TX](#)

FY 2010 Budget and Appropriations

On July 24th the U.S. House of Representatives passed their FY 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill. An amendment to continue to ban the use of federal funding for needle exchange programs was defeated. Last week the Senate Appropriations Committee passed their version out of committee. That body is not expected to take the bill up on the floor before recess. The mental health services and substance abuse prevention and treatment block grants were leveled funded in both bills. Programs of regional and national significance (provides funding for primary care and behavioral healthcare integration and homelessness prevention programs) received increased funding from both chambers. Funding for activities authorized under the Combating Autism Act increased by \$6 million above FY 2009 levels. The Lifespan Respite Act, authorized in 2006, received funding for the first time in the House budget at \$2.5 million. The House bill also increased Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants by \$110 million over FY 2009 for a total of \$3.1 billion.

Not many details were released from the Senate version. When more information is available NACBHDD will outline comparisons of the two bills.

Frank Melville Supportive Housing Act of 2009 (HR 1675)

In mid- July, the House passed HR 1675. The legislation now moves to the Senate for consideration. The bill is intended to modernize the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program, and will create a Project-Rental Assistance Demonstration program to expand the supply of permanent supportive housing for low-income persons with disabilities. H.R. 1675 amends Section 811 of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act, which established the Housing for Persons with Disabilities program. The Section 811 program is the only Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) permanent supportive housing program exclusively serving persons with disabilities.

The new Section 811 legislation (H.R. 1675) was re-introduced with the same language as the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2008 (H.R. 5772), which passed in the House unanimously in September 2008.

It is not clear when or if the Senate will consider the legislation.