

## DC Update

May 9, 2008

### Supplemental Spending Measure

The House completed a war supplemental spending bill and expected to take the legislation to the floor this week; however opposition from within the Democratic Party stalled the process. The Blue Dog Coalition (a large group of fiscally conservative Democrats) objects to increased spending measures that would expand higher education funding for active duty veterans without providing offsets. Leadership pulled the bill and will work with their party members, however it is expected they will still take the bill to the floor late next week.

House appropriators will bypass a committee mark-up and take the measure directly to the floor where it will be amended. The first amendment will include funding for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the second amendment will include policy riders associated with the spending (i.e. withdrawal timelines), and the third will include spending for domestic priorities; including the Medicaid moratoria. *It is important that you urge your Representative to vote for the Medicaid moratoria spending measure.*

The Senate has outlined a different approach. That chamber plans to go through the committee mark-up process and then take the bill to the floor. Senate Appropriations Chairman, Robert Byrd (D-WV), postponed the planned mark-up this week to allow the House time to proceed, but will move ahead next week regardless of House activity. Of note, the Senate legislation also provides a provision to include the Medicaid moratoria.

The Administration has indicated that the bill, in its current form, would be vetoed. NACBHDD will keep members updated as the measure progresses.

### FY 2009 Appropriations

The House and Senate will soon reveal FY 2009 appropriations bills. In meetings with House and Senate, NACBHDD learned that Congress will attempt to restore any cuts offered by the Administration's FY 2009 budget proposal to programs within the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (L-HHS-Ed) appropriations bill; however staff noted increases for most programs may be difficult to find. The House will work to complete the L-HHS-Ed bill before the end of the summer; however the Senate may not follow that same process. We anticipate a continuing resolution (CR) that may extend current funding until late January or February 2009. As details emerge, NACBHDD will keep members updated.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Restoration**

In the past few months, ADA restoration negotiations have been ongoing between the disabilities and business communities and it appears that the two sides are getting closer to an agreement. The goal of ADA restoration is to restore Congress' intent from shifting the focus of defining a person "truly" disabled, to whether the person was treated unfairly on the basis of disability (actual, past or perceived). In recent years, courts have narrowed Congressional intent in their holdings of ADA cases. In a bi-partisan movement along with the business community, disabilities groups have urged Congress to pass legislation that would restore the original intent of the ADA.

US House of Representatives Majority Leader, Steny Hoyer (D-MD) has been a champion on this front and will continue to provide leadership to keep the process moving. NACBHDD will alert members as more information and language become available.

## **SAMHSA, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)**

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention recently announced Francis Harding as the new center director. Ms. Harding comes from New York where she was the Associate Commissioner of the Division of Prevention and Recovery, New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

*In a press release from SAMHSA, Administrator Terry Cline, Ph.D said, "Fran is recognized as one of the nation's leading experts in the field of drug and alcohol policy. As CSAP director, she takes the helm of the federal center that is critical to advancing our nation's progress in preventing substance abuse."*