

Sustain and Bolster TBI Act Programs

About Brain Injury

A traumatic brain injury is an alteration in brain function, or other evidence of brain pathology, caused by an external force. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that 1.7 million people in the U.S. sustain traumatic brain injuries (TBIs) annually and at least 3.17 million children and adults live with a permanent disability as a result of a TBI. The cost to society for medical care and lost wages associated with TBI is \$60 billion annually.

Individuals with TBI may experience memory loss; concentration or attention problems; slowed learning; and difficulty with planning, reasoning or judgment. Emotional and behavioral consequences include depression, anxiety, impulsivity, aggression and thoughts of suicide.

Physical challenges of TBI may include fatigue, headaches, problems with balance or motor skills, sensory losses and seizures. TBI can lead to respiratory, circulatory, digestive and neurological diseases, including epilepsy, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

Poor outcomes after TBI result from shortened length of stays in both inpatient and outpatient medical treatment settings. Payers point to a lack of sufficient evidence-based research as a primary reason for coverage denial of medically-necessary treatment. This occurs particularly when behavioral health services and cognitive rehabilitation are needed.

About BIAA

Founded in 1980, the mission of the Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA) is to provide help, hope and healing to the millions of Americans who sustain brain injuries each year. BIAA is dedicated to increasing access to quality health care and raising awareness and understanding of brain injury through advocacy, education and research. Together with its nationwide network of chartered state affiliates, as well as hundreds of local chapters and support groups across the country, BIAA is the Voice of Brain Injury for individuals, their families and the professionals who serve them.

Take Action Now!

Appropriate \$22 million dollars for TBI Act programs

Full funding of \$37 million is needed to advance research, awareness and treatment of brain injury. BIAA calls on Congress to work towards this goal by increasing this year's appropriations as follows:

CDC – Appropriate \$10 million to strengthen data collection; link both military and civilian populations with TBI services; increase public awareness; conduct public health research; provide education and awareness to primary care providers; and fund development and dissemination of acute care brain injury guidelines.

HRSA State Grant Program – Appropriate \$8 million to sustain 18 existing states and fund 4 new additional states and provide training and technical assistance to grantees. This is a vital step in ensuring that every state, territory, District of Columbia and the American Indian Consortium will be funded in future years.

HRSA Protection and Advocacy Program (P&A) – Appropriate \$4 million for population-based allotments to assist individuals with brain injury in exercising their rights and accessing public service systems.

Reauthorize the TBI Act in 2012

The TBI Act of 1996, as amended in 2008, authorizes agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct studies and establish innovative programs with respect to TBI. BIAA urges Congress to reauthorize this critical legislation before the end of the 112th Congress and to amend the legislation to:

- Expand the use of grant funds to support direct services.
- Provide funding to each state through a formula funding platform.
- Expand HRSA's defined components to include service system coordination.

Continued and expanded funding for TBI Act programs is vital to the development of statewide systems of care for individuals with brain injury.

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