

May 13, 2011

The Honorable Denny Rehberg  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services  
Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services  
Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The undersigned organizations respectfully request your support for \$22 million for FY 2012 to fund programs authorized by the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Act as amended in 2008 in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). We also request an increase for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) TBI Model Systems administered by the Department of Education.

Known as the “silent epidemic,” TBI continues to be the signature injury of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and incidence is increasing here at home among our nation’s civilian population. From the battlefield to the football field, TBI remains a leading cause of death and disability in both adults and youth. Primary funding to address this growing population is provided through these programs.

Therefore, we request funding for TBI Act programs in the following amounts:

- **\$10 million** for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention TBI Registries and Surveillance, Brain Injury Acute Care Guidelines, Prevention and National Public Education/Awareness
- **\$8 million** for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Federal TBI State Grant Program
- **\$4 million** for the HRSA Federal TBI Protection & Advocacy (P&A) Systems Grant Program

Congress should also increase funding by **\$1.5 million** in FY2012 for NIDRR’s TBI Model Systems of Care program, in order to add one new Collaborative Research Project. In addition, given the national importance of this research program, the TBI Model Systems of Care should receive “line-item” status within the broader NIDRR budget.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Injury Center estimates that 1.7 million TBIs occur each year and 3.4 million Americans live with a life long disability as a result of TBI. CDC plays a leading role in standardizing evidence based guidelines for the management of TBI, linking civilian and military populations with TBI services, and educating primary care

Page 2  
May 13, 2011  
TBI Appropriations

physicians, of which \$3 million dollars of this request would go to fund CDC's work in those areas.

The TBI Act authorizes the HHS, Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) to award grants to (1) States, American Indian Consortia and territories to improve access to service delivery and to (2) state Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems to expand advocacy services to include individuals with traumatic brain injury. For the past fourteen years the HRSA Federal TBI State Grant Program has supported State efforts to address the needs of persons with brain injury and their families and to expand and improve services to underserved and unserved populations including children and youth; veterans and returning troops; and individuals with co-occurring conditions.

In FY 2009, HRSA reduced the number of State grant awards to increase each monetary award to help States better carry out the goals of their grants. However, less than half of the States now have grants, and others that had participated in the program have now been forced to close down their operations, leaving many unable to access brain injury care.

The HRSA TBI P&A Program currently provides funding to all state P&A systems for purposes of protecting the legal and human rights of individuals with TBI. While each state P&A receives a grant, the award amounts are minimal. A \$4 million appropriation would increase the grant awards to ensure that each P&A can move towards providing a significant PATBI program with appropriate staff time and expertise.

Funding for the TBI Model Systems in the Department of Education is urgently needed to ensure that the nation's valuable TBI research capacity is not diminished, and to maintain and build upon the 16 TBI Model Systems research centers around the country. The TBI Model Systems are the only source of non-proprietary longitudinal data on what happens to people with brain injury. They are a key source of evidence-based medicine, and serve as a "proving ground" for future researchers.

We ask that you consider favorably these requests for the CDC, the HRSA Federal TBI Program, and NIDRR TBI Model Systems Program to further data collection, increase public awareness, improve medical care, assist states in coordinating systems, protect the rights of persons with TBI, and bolster vital research.

Sincerely,

APSE  
American Dance Therapy Association

Page 3  
May 13, 2011  
TBI Appropriations

American Physical Therapy Association  
American Trauma Society  
Autism National Committee  
Blinded Veterans Association  
Brain Injury Association of America  
Family Voices  
Friends of the TBI Model Systems  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
National Association of County Behavioral and Developmental Disability Directors  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities  
National Disability Rights Network  
Safe States Alliance  
School Social Work Association of America  
The Advocacy Institute  
United Spinal Association  
Brain Injury Association of Connecticut  
Brain Injury Association of Hawaii  
Brain Injury Association of Illinois  
Brain Injury Association of Iowa  
Brain Injury Association of Louisiana  
Brain Injury Association of Michigan  
Brain Injury Association of Minnesota  
Brain Injury Association of Mississippi  
Brain Injury Association of Missouri  
Brain Injury Association of Nebraska  
Brain Injury Association of New Jersey  
Brain Injury Association of New York State  
Brain Injury Association of North Carolina  
Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania  
Brain Injury Association of Rhode Island  
Brain Injury Association of Tennessee  
Brain Injury Association of Texas  
Brain Injury Association of Utah  
Brain Injury Association of Vermont  
Brain Injury Association of Virginia  
Brain Injury Association of Washington  
Brain Injury Association of Washington, D.C.  
Brain Injury Association of Wisconsin