



Brain Injury Association of America

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The mission of the Brain Injury Association of America is to create a better future through brain injury prevention, research, education and advocacy.

Facts:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that at least 5.3 million Americans currently live with disabilities resulting from a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and 1.5 million Americans sustain a TBI each year.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that the risk of TBI is highest among adolescents, young adults, and people over the age of 75.

Cost of TBI: The cost of TBI in the U.S. is estimated to be \$48.3 billion annually; Hospitalization accounts for \$31.7 billion, and fatal brain injuries cost the nation \$16.6 billion each year.

February 2004

The Congressional Brain Injury Task Force

Definition of Brain Injury:

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is an insult to the brain, not of a degenerative or congenital nature, caused by an external physical force that may produce a diminished or altered state of consciousness, which results in an impairment of cognitive abilities or physical functioning. It also can result in the disturbance of behavioral or emotional functioning.

*Adopted by the Association's Board of Directors, February 22, 1986.
(Not intended as an exclusive statement of the population served by the Association.)*

The Congressional Brain Injury Task Force:

In March 2001, in response to the "Silent Epidemic" of brain injury, Congressmen James C. Greenwood (R-PA) and Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ) formed the bipartisan Congressional Brain Injury Task Force. In a letter to the Association, the Congressmen wrote: "As Members of Congress concerned with the health of all Americans, we share your deep interest in increasing awareness of the incidence and prevalence of brain injury in the United States...[Y]our national leadership in addressing various aspects of brain injury is most important to us."

The Brain Injury Association of America Urges Congress to Join the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force Support

It is imperative that we **write, call and urge** our Representatives to join the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force so that they can demonstrate publicly their commitment to the issues surrounding brain injury in the United States. In a "Dear Colleague" letter and subsequent correspondence, Congressmen Greenwood and Pascrell have called on Representatives to join the task force to help:

- ▲ Increase awareness of the incidence and prevalence of brain injury in the U.S.
- ▲ Focus on research initiatives for rehabilitation, therapies and medications for people with brain injury.
- ▲ Study and address the effect brain injury have on families, children, socialization, education, employment and other major life activities.
- ▲ Educate the public about the issues surrounding brain injury.
- ▲ Increase funding for brain injury in an effort to "make the lives of those with brain injury and the lives of their families a little easier."

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Why is Brain Injury the Nation's Silent Epidemic?

- ▲ Each year, 1.5 million Americans sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI) resulting in more than 4,000 individuals sustaining a TBI each day.
- ▲ One million people are treated and released annually from hospital emergency rooms after sustaining a brain injury.
- ▲ Brain injury claims more than 50,000 lives and leaves more than 80,000 individuals with lifelong disabilities each year.
- ▲ With TBI occurring every 21 seconds, this public health concern ranks as the leading cause of death and disability in children and young adults.
- ▲ For those who survive and their families, brain injury is life altering. Serious physical impairments are a frequent result of brain injury, as are a variety of cognitive, behavioral and emotional complications.
- ▲ The costs related to brain injury are staggering. Individuals with severe brain injury typically face five-to-ten years of intensive rehabilitation with cumulative costs exceeding \$35 billion annually.
- ▲ On an annual basis, 40,000 persons over the age of 65 visit emergency departments for TBI as a result of a fall; 16,000 are hospitalized and 4,000 die.

For more information about the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force or for information about the Brain Injury Association of America's Government Relations initiatives, please contact us at (703) 761-0750.