



# FEDERAL ACTION NETWORK

## AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Services, Inc.

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

#### April 2019

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#### Psychologists Storm Capitol Hill During the 2019 Practice Leadership Conference

In March, as a part of APA's 2019 Practice Leadership Conference (PLC) in Washington D.C., hundreds of psychologists and psychology graduate students visited nearly 300 Capitol Hill offices to advocate for their profession. Representing their state and territorial psychological associations, conference attendees asked members of Congress to co-sponsor the **Medicare Mental Health Access Act (H.R. 884)** and the **Mental Health Telemedicine Expansion Act (H.R. 6781)**.



*Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)*

The **Medicare Mental Health Access Act**, introduced by Reps. Judy Chu (D-CA), Jason Smith (R-MO), Markwayne Mullin (R-OK), and Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), is a bipartisan bill that would allow psychologists to practice independently without physician supervision in all treatment settings under Medicare. H.R. 884 would eliminate the unnecessary physician sign-off and oversight of psychologists' services and add clinical psychologists to the list of providers in Medicare's definition of a "physician." If enacted, psychologists would also be eligible for ten percent Medicare bonus payments for services delivered in federally designated mental health professional shortage areas.

The **Mental Health Telemedicine Expansion Act**, introduced by Reps. Suzan DelBene (D-WA), and Tom Reed (R-NY), would allow psychologists to provide telehealth services to Medicare beneficiaries regardless of where the patient is located.

The timing of PLC allowed psychologists to weigh in on issues making headlines. Shortly before the conference, news broke that several APA-accredited programs at Argosy University institutions were about to close, stranding doctoral psychology students enrolled in these programs. Conference attendees went to Capitol Hill with information to raise awareness of this issue. Additionally, shortly after the conference, the Trump administration started reattacking the Affordable Care Act (ACA). This was timely as psychologists were just on Capitol Hill talking with their Members of Congress about the importance of the [ACA's](#) mental health and substance use disorder coverage. More information regarding Argosy is available [here](#).



Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)



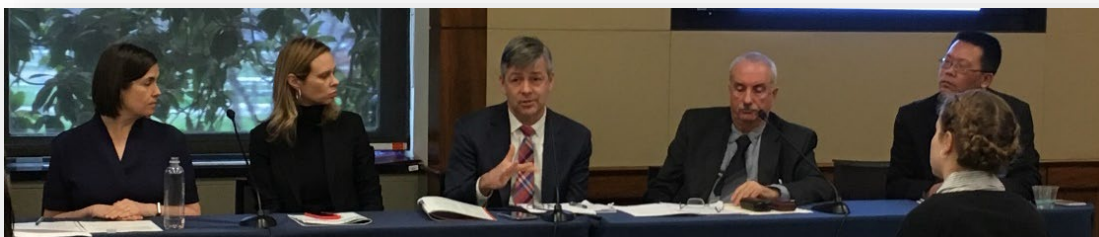
PLC Participants

## 2019 Practice Leadership Conference (PLC)

### APA Co-sponsors Congressional Briefing: Protecting and Promoting the Human Rights of Scientists, Scholars, and Students Around the World

On March 22, APA co-sponsored a congressional briefing with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Chemical Society, the Committee of Concerned Scientists, the Scholars at Risk Network, and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (APA's Division 9), hosted by The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The briefing, **Protecting and Promoting the Human Rights of Scientists, Scholars, and Students Around the World**, educated congressional staffers on the fact that thousands of scientists, scholars, and students are



killed, imprisoned, attacked, or threatened around the world each year because of what they teach, write, or say. Such attacks undermine higher education systems and stifle space to think, question, and share ideas freely.

The speakers included Olga Hünler, PhD, a Turkish psychologist (University of Bremen) who has been forced to live outside of her own country for the past several years. The panel of speakers also included: Robert Quinn, JD (Scholars at Risk), Rebecca Everly, JD, PhD (National Academies Committee on Human Rights), Eugene Chudnovsky, PhD (Lehman College), and Ten Biao, PhD (New York University and Institute for China's Democratic Transition).

## APA Provides Comments on HHS Interagency Pain Management Task Force's Draft Report

On March 20, APA submitted [comments](#) to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary of Health (ASH) regarding the December 2018 Interagency Pain Management Task Force's [draft report](#).

The comments highlight APA's strong support for "the report's recognition of the biopsychosocial nature of pain, the importance of behavioral health approaches to pain management, and the need for work on several fronts to improve access to multidisciplinary pain management care that includes behavioral interventions." APA also commended the report's inclusion of behavioral approaches to pain management.



APA CEO Arthur C. Evans, Jr., and Nancy Ruddy, President of APA Division 38 signed the comments.

## APA Signs on to Letters Addressing Tobacco Control Issues in FY 2020 Appropriations

On March 14, APA joined public health organizations in signing onto letters addressed to the [House](#) Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies and the [Senate](#) Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. The letters urge the subcommittees to approve the authorized level of user fees (\$712 million) for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to oversee tobacco products. These fees give the FDA resources it needs to protect children and reduce the serious health and economic harms that tobacco products cause. These letters respond to the dramatic increase in youth use of e-cigarettes, which the Commissioner of the FDA and the Surgeon General have called an "epidemic."



## President's FY 2020 Budget Would Cut Funding for Science, Services, and Infrastructure; Increase Funding for a Wall

The Trump Administration released its Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 budget in two parts over the week of March 11 – 18, 2019. Every year since 2014, Congress has approved a budget agreement that raises the spending caps but there is no agreement yet for FY 2020. APA Science Advocacy's new [blogpost](#) discusses the impact President Trump's FY 2020 budget would have on science funding. See why APA and other scientific organizations are advocating to [#raisethecaps](#).



## APA Argues Against Proposed SNAP Cuts



On March 13, APA submitted [regulatory comments](#) to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service opposing its proposal to make it more difficult for states to receive waivers of the time limit restricting how long people can receive food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) without working. APA comments highlight the benefits of SNAP, including reduced food insecurity, improved health, decreased psychological distress and reduced healthcare expenditures. The comments also highlight psychological research that shows why harsh work requirements don't work.

## APA Supports the Equality Act

On March 22, APA sent a [letter](#) of support for the Equality Act ([S. 788](#), [H.R. 5](#)), which would amend existing civil rights law to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity) at work, in places of public accommodation, housing, credit, education, jury service, and in programs and facilities that receive federal funding.

APA explained that the bill is necessary as discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity remains a grave problem in the United States and can seriously harm physical and mental health. In contrast, research shows that supportive legislation is typically followed by reduced psychological distress and increased life satisfaction.



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## Additional APA and Coalition Advocacy Activity

APA actively participates in numerous coalitions with other scientific and professional organizations to pursue shared advocacy goals. Below are the letters APA initiated or signed on to as part of a coalition.

- Ψ APA expressed its [support for the legislation](#), “What You Can Do for Your Country Act of 2019,” being introduced by Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY). The bill takes an important step towards preserving the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program and ensuring it will be administered effectively and efficiently for participants.
- Ψ The [Coalition for National Science Funding](#) (CNSF) is a broad-based group of professional organizations, universities, scientific societies, and businesses (APA is a member). CNSF sent a letter to Congress making two important recommendations: (1) strongly encourage and recommend that Congress reach a bipartisan agreement to raise the budget caps for non-defense discretionary spending, and (2) CNSF recommends a \$9 billion appropriation for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in fiscal year 2020.
- Ψ APA, a member of a [coalition of national organizations committed to children’s health](#), signed a letter in strong support of the “Advancing Care for Exceptional Kids Act of 2019” (ACE Kids Act, [S. 317/H.R. 1226](#)), which has been incorporated into the Medicaid Services Investment and Accountability Act of 2019 ([H.R. 1839](#)).

## ICYMI: News You Can Use

[Webinar - Public Service Loan Forgiveness: How You Get It, and Why We’re Fighting to Preserve It](#)

The APA Office of Early Career and Graduate Student Affairs within the Education Directorate sponsored a webinar to discuss the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF). A non-captioned recording link to the PSLF webinar is available [here](#), along with the [webinar slides](#) and Hill Visits [Talking Points for PSLF](#).

## Federal Funding and Other Resources

### Department of Education

- [Grants and Funding](#)

### Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health

- [HHS Grants to Prevent Teenage Pregnancy](#) – April 15

### Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

- [Funding & Grants](#)
- [Special Emphasis Notice \(SEN\): AHRQ Announces Interest in Health Services Research to Address the Opioids Crisis](#)

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)
- [Grants to Support New Investigators in Addressing Cross-Cutting Violence Prevention and Opioid Overdose Prevention](#)
- [CDC: Collecting Information for the National Violent Death Reporting System](#) – April 15
- [CDC Research Grants to Identify Effective Strategies for Opioid Overdose Prevention](#) – April 8

### ***Health Resources & Services Administration***

- [Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#)
- [Faculty Loan Repayment Program](#)
- [HRSA-19-002 - Graduate Psychology Education \(GPE\) Program](#)
- [HRSA-19-085 - Opioid Workforce Expansion Program \(OWEP\) Professionals](#)
- [HRSA-19-007 - Geriatrics Academic Career Award Program](#)
- [Rural Communities Opioid Response Program-Implementation \(RCORP-Implementation\)](#)
- [Save the Dates: Virtual Job Fairs for SUD Clinicians and Employers – through March](#)

### ***National Institutes of Health***

- [Grants and Funding](#)
  - [Summer Research Education Experience Program](#)
- [K01 - NINDS Faculty Development Award to Promote Diversity in Neuroscience Research](#)
- [NIH Grants to Translate Research into Clinical Practice – April 15](#)
- [NIH Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health – May 14](#)
- [Predoctoral Training in Advanced Data Analytics for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research \(BSSR\) - Institutional Research Training Program \[T32\]](#)
- [NIH Loan Repayment](#)
- [Research Training and Career Development Programs](#)
- [NIMH Programs to Enhance Workforce Diversity](#)
- [Office of Disease Prevention – How to Apply for Funding](#)

### ***Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration***

- [Grant Announcements and Awards](#)
- [SAMHSA Grants for First Responders to Opioid Overdose – May 6](#)
- [Strategic Prevention Framework – Partnerships for Success](#)
- [Building Communities of Recovery](#)
- [Minority Aids Initiative: Substance Use Disorder Treatment for Racial/Ethnic Minority Populations at High Risk for HIV/AIDS](#)

### **National Science Foundation**

- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Dear Colleague Letter: NSF Convergence Accelerator Pilot \(NSF C-Accel\)](#)
- [Science and Technology Centers: Integrative Partnerships](#)
- [Dear Colleague Letter: Expanding the NSF INCLUDES National Network](#)
- [Small Business Technology Transfer Program Phase I \(STTR\)](#)
- [Small Business Innovation Research Program Phase I \(SBIR\)](#)
- [Dear Colleague Letter: Fundamental Discipline-Based Education Research \(DBER\) Focused on Undergraduate and Graduate STEM Education within the EHR Core Research \(ECR\) Program](#)
- [Harnessing the Data Revolution \(HDR\): Institutes for Data-Intensive Research in Science and Engineering - Frameworks \(I-DIRSE-FW\)](#)
- [Harnessing the Data Revolution \(HDR\): Transdisciplinary Research in Principles of Data Science Phase I](#)
- [Growing Convergence Research \(GCR\)](#)
- [Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\)](#)
- [EHR Core Research \(ECR\): STEM Learning and Learning Environments, Broadening Participation, and Workforce Development \(NSF 19-508\)](#)
- [Faculty Early Career Development Program \(CAREER\) \(NSF 17-537\)](#)

### **Department of Justice**

- [Graduate Research Fellowship Program in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, FY 2019](#)
- [DOJ Training and Technical Assistance for Violence Against Women – April 11](#)
- [Grants to Tribal Governments for Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction Solicitation – April 11](#)
- [DOJ Opioid Affected Youth Initiative – May](#)

## National Institute of Justice

- [Current Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Investigator-Initiated Research and Evaluation on Firearms Violence](#)
- [Research and Evaluation on Violence Against Women: Sexual Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence, Fiscal Year 2019](#)
- [Graduate Research Fellowship in the Social and Behavioral Sciences](#)

## Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

- [Funding Opportunities](#)

