



FEDERAL ACTION NETWORK

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

October 2018

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APA Addresses the Impact of the Trump Administration's Immigration Policy

APA joined more than 110 organizations as signatories of the [Coalition for Health Funding](#) (CHF) sign-on letter responding to Health and Human Services Secretary (HHS) Alex Azar's recent decision to transfer funds from public health and medical research programs to pay for the unexpected and ongoing costs of detaining children as required by the Trump Administration's "zero tolerance" policy. [Yahoo News](#) reported that Secretary Azar sent a letter to Congress notifying it of the Department's intention to reallocate \$266 million in FY 2018 funding to help care for the children referred to HHS as a consequence of the family separation policy at the US-Mexico border.

The CHF letter urges Secretary Azar "to make public [the Department's] plan to respond to and recover from this public health crisis, and to request that Congress provide the funding necessary -- through annual or supplemental appropriations legislation -- to ensure the health and well-being of children and families in the Department's care." The letter further acknowledges that "[h]istorically, the HHS Secretary has used his or her statutory authority to transfer funding to support new



or unexpected priorities, including surges in unaccompanied immigrant children at the border.” It also notes that “the administration has proposed policy changes that would allow for the indefinite detention of immigrant families and would have significant financial and human costs.”

APA CEO Discusses the Research around the Lengthy Separation of Children from Parents

In July, APA CEO Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD, recorded a [short video](#) on immigration policy and the mental health impact on individuals when families are separated at the request of the U.S. Senate leadership. In the video, Evans explains the psychological research that shows lengthy separations of children from the parents can cause severe psychological distress. He stressed the use of the research to inform immigration policies.

Shutdown Averted: President Signs Defense/Labor, Health and Human Services ‘Minibus’; Keeps the Government Open Until December 7

On Friday, September 28th, President Trump signed the Fiscal Year 2019 spending package that included continued funding for the Departments of Defense, Labor, HHS-Education Appropriations Act ([HR 6157](#)) and a Continuing Resolution that keeps the government open until December 7. This is the first time in a decade that the Defense and Labor-HHS-Education bills have been signed into law before the end of a fiscal year.

National Institutes of Health. Congress provided NIH with a [\\$2 billion \(5.4 percent\) increase to \\$39 billion](#). This is the fourth year in a row the NIH budget has been increased by at least that amount. For FY 2019, NIH receives a better than five percent boost, and while much of the increase is targeted to specific programs, every individual institute’s budget is increased by at least 2.6 percent. Once again, Conferees rejected the recommendation from the Administration’s FY 2019 budget to consolidate three other federal agencies within NIH (including the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality).

Health Resources and Services Administration. HR 6157 also includes increases for behavioral health workforce programs at the Health Resources and Services Administration. The bill provides steady funding of \$75 million for the Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program (BHWET) and \$18 million for the Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) Program, representing a \$10 million increase.

The GPE Program is HRSA’s primary psychology workforce training program, providing grants to doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral programs that train psychologists in integrated settings. The BHWET program, also administered by HRSA, provides training across the continuum of behavioral health professionals and paraprofessionals, including psychologists. The investment in both programs will help to strengthen and expand the psychology workforce to increase access to underserved populations.



Congress Passes Bipartisan Opioid Bill; Legislation Goes to President's Desk

On October 2nd, Congress passed the *SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act* ([H.R. 6](#)), a bipartisan opioids bill that aims to stop the spread of opioid addiction and increase funding and resources for treatment. The Senate approved the legislation by a vote of 98-1. The bill now goes to the White House for President Donald Trump's signature.

H.R. 6 takes a number of important steps to improve the prevention and treatment of opioid use disorders and to help individuals achieve and maintain recovery. These provisions include increased flexibility in the provision of telehealth services under Medicaid and Medicare for substance use disorders (SUDs); support for the substance use treatment workforce through a new, targeted loan repayment program; and the authorization of grants to hospitals and emergency clinics for implementing alternative pain management treatments that limit opioid prescriptions.



In a statement applauding the Senate's passage of the bill, APA CEO Arthur Evans, Jr., PhD, [commended](#) Congress "for working together to develop and pass wide-ranging legislation to strengthen our response to the deadly opioid epidemic." He urged the President to sign the bill as soon as possible. Evans also noted that "while the legislation passed today is a step in the right direction, greater investments are needed to respond to a crisis of this magnitude. Tragically, we are still in the middle of the crisis, and it's getting worse, not better."

Prior to the passage of the bill, APA urged Congress to work together to produce meaningful legislation to be signed into law this year and submitted [comments](#) to House and Senate Leadership asking the Conference Committee include certain provisions in the final legislation. APA's recommendations included topics related to increasing access to opioid use disorder treatment under Medicaid, expanding access to Medicare telehealth services for substance use disorders and co-occurring mental disorders, enforcement of mental health and substance use parity, and support for the substance abuse treatment workforce.

APA CONA Members/Students Advocate for Funding of Kevin and Avonte's Law

Six APA Committee on Aging (CONA) members paired with graduate psychology students to advocate for \$2 million in funding for Kevin and Avonte's Law ([S.2070](#)). The members conducted 14 in-district advocacy meetings including meetings with Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS), Representatives Michael Bilirakis (R-FL), and Roger Marshall (R-KS).

The statute's primary purpose is to help individuals who wander. It is of particular interest to the aging population as well as those individuals living with disabilities (most notably autism).

The legislation, authorized in March 2018 as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 ([Public Law 115-141](#)), has no current funding. With sufficient funding, however, the statute is designed to reduce the risk of



Dr. Walter Boot, Florida State University

injury and death relating to wandering, add grant program support for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities, safeguard the well-being of individuals with disabilities during interactions with law enforcement, and provides education and resources to law enforcement agencies, schools, and clinicians.

In July, APA staff provided training for the APA members and their students to prepare them for the advocacy visits in their home state. The training also provided an opportunity for the students to learn firsthand about policymaking, advocacy, and the role of psychologists in educating key stakeholders, including policy makers.

APA Supports the Pregnant Women in Custody Act

In September, APA was pleased to support the introduction of the Pregnant Women in Custody Act ([HR 6806](#)). The legislation promotes prenatal care for pregnant women in custody as well as a federal ban on shackling of pregnant incarcerated women. The bill impacts a small but growing

proportion of the population—women and girls in the criminal justice system—and paves the way for future reforms. APA hopes to see it advance later this year or early next year.

APA members, our advocacy partners, and formerly incarcerated women provided

extensive input into HR 6806. Representative Karen Bass (D-CA) introduced the legislation with a majority of women in the House (both Republican and Democrat) as cosponsors. The legislation has received [considerable press coverage](#).

#BooksNotGuns: APA Continues to Oppose the Purchase of Firearms with Title IV-A Funds

APA continues to engage in ongoing efforts to explicitly prohibit the use of federal funds, authorized under the Student Success and Academic Enrichment Grants program ([Title IV-A of the Every Student Succeeds Act](#)), for the purchase of firearms.

Most recently, APA [sent a letter](#) to the Labor-HHS Appropriations Conferees affirming that Title IV-A funds are intended to promote school climate, mental health, and academic success.

As previously reported, in September Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos was considering allowing school districts to purchase fire arms with these federal dollars. [APA](#) and the [Title IV-A Coalition](#) responded in strong opposition.

APA will continue to advocate that school districts are only permitted to use these scarce federal funds for their Congressionally intended purpose.



Psychological Scientist Meets with Congress to Urge Increased Funding for Medical Research

The Rally for Medical Research is an annual [event](#) designed to bring together the wide-ranging groups who support National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded medical research. As psychologists know quite well, medical research – including that conducted by psychologists – undeniably saves and improves lives. David Schwebel, PhD, participated at this year's 2018 Rally. Schwebel is a university professor of psychology and associate dean at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where he researches pediatric unintentional injury prevention. He joined patients, physicians, scientists, and members representing dozens of other organizations, traveling from across the United States to meet with their Members of Congress and share their personal stories to help the Senators and Representatives recognize the value of NIH-funded medical research. Read [Schwebel's story](#) of his participation in the Rally.



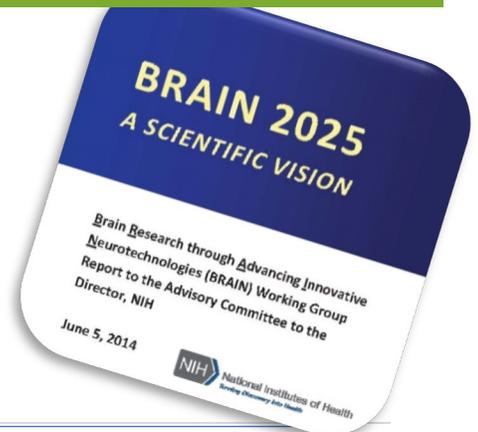
Psychologist Hunter Hoffman Demonstrates Virtual Reality on Capitol Hill



Hunter Hoffman, PhD, and his University of Washington colleague David Patterson, PhD, have been working on clinical health applications of virtual reality for more than twenty years. The programs they have developed and tested, including “[Snow World](#)” and “[Snow Canyon](#),” have been shown to reduce the need for pain medication in burn patients during painful wound care procedures. With laptops and VR face masks in tow, Dr. Hoffman showed this technology to policymakers, congressional staff and at least one member of Congress during the [Coalition for Health Funding's Public Health Fair](#), an annual hands-on event on Capitol Hill. [Read more.](#)

NIH Seeks Input on Next Phase of the BRAIN Initiative

The National Institutes of Health recently released a Request for Information (RFI) soliciting feedback on *the Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative*. The purpose of the RFI is to gain feedback on the vision, priorities, and goals outlined in [BRAIN 2025: A Scientific Vision](#), the strategic plan for the BRAIN Initiative, which will be updated by summer 2019 to guide the next five years of the research. APA plans to submit a formal response to the RFI by the **November 15, 2018 deadline** and welcomes your thoughts and ideas. [Read more.](#)



Opportunity for Comment: Surgeon General Call to Action for Community Health and Prosperity

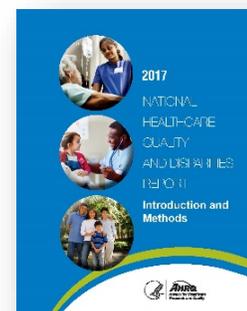
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is requesting public comments on an upcoming Surgeon General's [Call to Action on Community Health and Prosperity](#). According to CDC, the goal of the Call to Action is to clearly demonstrate that investments in community health have the potential to improve the health and prosperity of communities. The goal is also to issue a call to action to the private sector and local policy makers for investment in communities, unilaterally or as part of a multisector or other consortium, to improve community health.

APA will submit comments. Accordingly, we request your assistance in identifying programs that are grounded in psychological science and that have a demonstrated impact on communities to highlight in our comments to the Surgeon General. **Submit items for inclusion in APA's public comments to Rosie Sheehan (rsheehan@apa.org) by October 15. Please include the following information:**

- Name of program or service
- Type of partnership (e.g., private, multi-sector, local, consortium)
- Population target(s) of program or service (e.g., specific age groups, sex, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, locality, disability status)
- Indicate whether this program or service has been evaluated as an effective intervention for the target populations?
 - Please provide a hyperlink to or title and first author for the study that best establishes the program or service's effectiveness.
 - For this study, how long were effects associated with the program sustained?
- Indicate if this program has been associated with improved outcomes in one or more of the following areas?
 - Responses may include: Health outcomes, mental health outcomes, educational outcomes, criminal justice outcomes, economic outcomes)
- Please provide a short description or any additional information you would like APA and CDC to consider.

In Case You Missed It: AHRQ's 2017 National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Report

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) [2017 National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Report](#) tracks more than 300 healthcare measures, organized around the access to care, quality of care, disparities of care, and six priority areas, including patient safety, person-centered care, care coordination, effective treatment, healthy living, and care affordability. Non-metropolitan regions saw improvements in some measures of effective care for cancer, care coordination, and patient safety but disparities persisted in care coordination, patient safety, infant mortality, person-centered care, and access to care.



Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

- [Screening and Management of Unhealthy Alcohol Use in Primary Care: Dissemination and Implementation of PCOR Evidence \(R18\)](#)
-

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

Department of Education

- [Grants and Funding](#)

Health Resources & Services Administration

- [Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#)
- [Faculty Loan Repayment Program](#)
- [Workforce Grand Rounds Webinar Series: Integrating Opioid Use Disorder Treatment into Health Workforce Training- October 9, 2019](#)
- [Behavioral Health Virtual Job Fair](#)
- [Remote Pregnancy Monitoring Challenge](#)

National Institutes of Health

- [Grants and Funding](#)
- [NIH Loan Repayment](#)
- [Research Training and Career Development Programs](#)
- [NIMH Programs to Enhance Workforce Diversity](#)
- [NIMHD Loan Repayment Program \(September – November 15, 2018\)](#)
- [Office of Disease Prevention – How to Apply for Funding](#)
- [Responding to Opioid Use Disorders \(OUD\) in Tribal Communities in the Context of SAMHSA and CDC](#)
- [HEALing Communities Study: Developing and Testing an Integrated Approach to Address the Opioid Crisis](#)

National Science Foundation

- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\)](#)
- [The NSF 2026 Idea Machine!- October 26, 2019](#)
- [Small Business Innovation Research Program Phase I \(SBIR\) December 2018 Submission](#)
- [Small Business Technology Transfer Program Phase I \(STTR\)](#)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

- [Funding Opportunities](#)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- [Grant Announcements and Awards](#)

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