



November 27, 2018

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support for Passage of S.3657, the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Program Reauthorization Act of 2018

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), I write in support of S.3657, the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Program Reauthorization Act of 2018 which will be included in a markup of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on Thursday, November 29, 2018. ANCOR is a national, nonprofit trade association representing more than 1,400 private community providers of services to people with disabilities. Our members provide vital and intensive services from assisting with daily life activities to providing support and access to the greater community. Combined, we service over one million individuals with disabilities and work to shape policy, share solutions and strengthen the community.

The TBI Act is the only federal legislation that specifically assists states and other entities to develop and expand service delivery systems, and provide needed advocacy to meet the needs and protect the rights of individuals who have sustained a TBI and their families. TBI is a leading cause of death and disability among young Americans and continues to be one of the signature injuries of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. From the battlefield to the football field, American adults, youth and children sustain TBIs at an alarming rate. Federal assistance through TBI Act programs continues to be necessary to address this growing population.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) 5.3 million children and adults live with a permanent disability as a result of a TBI. This includes veterans who have sustained blast injuries, youth who have sustained sports-related concussions, survivors of automobile collisions, survivors of domestic violence attacks, and older Americans susceptible to falls. Every year, CDC estimates that 2.5 million Americans

incur a TBI. Of these, 52,000 die and 275,000 people are hospitalized. The total cost of these injuries in 2000 was approximately \$76.5 billion.

The TBI Act offers balanced and coordinated public policy in brain injury prevention, education, and research, and provides advocacy and community-based services for individuals living with TBIs and their families. Specifically, the TBI Act:

- Authorizes CDC to identify strategies to prevent TBI and implement public education programs to increase awareness and understanding of TBI;
- Authorizes the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to make grants to states to coordinate, expand, and enhance service delivery systems;
- Directs the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct basic and applied research related to TBI; and
- Authorizes ACL to make grants for the Protection and Advocacy for Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI) program, which provides critical advocacy services to ensure that people with TBIs live full and independent lives free from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

Reauthorization of the TBI Act is critical for individuals and families impacted by a TBI. Individuals who have sustained a TBI often need a complex array of services, including rehabilitation, medical and social services and employment assistance, and the TBI Act provides for programs that allow citizens to work and live in their homes and communities. The law also authorizes programs that increase public awareness for citizens and the health community alike, so that the prevalence of TBI is reduced and the best treatment options are available across the nation.

If you would like more information or to discuss further, please feel free to contact me at smeek@ancor.org or (202) 258-4462.

Sincerely,



Sarah Meek, MSW
Director of Legislative Affairs
American Network of Community Options and Resources