



June 2018

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Protect Student Financial Aid: There Is Still Time to Act

Your **HELP** is needed to **STOP** the U.S. House of Representatives from taking billions of dollars from the pockets of low- and moderate-income students. The full House is poised to consider H.R. 4508, "*Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform Act*," or PROSPER Act which:

- Eliminates the loan subsidy for undergraduate students,
- Eliminates the public service loan forgiveness program for new borrowers,
- Eliminates the GRAD plus program, and
- Caps graduate student borrowing under a new federal loan program.



This bill represents a **disinvestment in education** at a critical time when the “needs” of our national workforce demand increased commitment. Moreover, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) reports H.R. 4508 cuts student aid spending by roughly \$15 billion.

Contact your Members of Congress today. Let your Representative know that the passage of the so-called "PROSPER Act" will hurt our nation's

students. Urge your Senators to protect programs that support graduate study.

Please help ensure that students have access to higher education!

[Take Action Now!](#)

Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness (TEPSLF) Announced

The U.S. Department of Education recently announced the creation of a [Temporary Expansion of Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#) (TEPSLF) program. TEPSLF provides funding to borrowers hoping to benefit from the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program who have worked for at least ten years for a qualifying employer and have made 120 payments on their federal student loans but are not enrolled in a qualifying repayment plan. Additional information about TEPSLF and to determine eligibility is available on the Department of Education's [website](#). The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 ([Public Law 115-141](#)) included funding for TEPSLF.

APA Showcases NSF- Funded Research at Capitol Hill Exhibition

On May 9th, APA participated in the 24th Annual [Coalition for National Science Funding](#) (CNSF) Exhibition as part of an all-day event aimed at increasing Congressional awareness of the importance of the research supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF). To help convey the necessity of NSF's funding for basic science, APA sponsored a visit by [Kate Sweeny](#), a professor of psychology at the University of California, Riverside. Sweeny's NSF-funded work examines the effects of waiting and uncertainty on health and wellbeing.

Prior to the Exhibition, Sweeny, accompanied by APA staff, met with the offices of Senators Diane Feinstein (D-CA) and Kamala Harris (D-CA) as well as Representatives Pete Aguilar (D-CA), Barbara Comstock (R-VA), Raul Ruiz (D-CA), and Mark Takano (D-CA). She described her research with patients, law school graduates, and others experiencing uncertainty waiting for news or results, and how this experience gets "under the skin" to disrupt health, including sleep and immunity. Sweeny explained how small improvements in communications between patients and healthcare providers as well as communications via health information technology could reduce these health effects.



Kate Sweeny

At the Exhibition, Sweeny joined 32 interdisciplinary exhibitors to discuss her research with federal officials, including Representatives James Comer (R-KY) and Leonard Lance (R-NJ), along with Assistant Director of the NSF Directorate for Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences, Fay Cook.

Congressional outreach, like Sweeny's, is essential for communicating psychological research to policymakers and promoting the development of psychologically-informed, evidence-based policy. Sweeny's stories, alongside those of other science advocates at APA and throughout the scientific community, detailing how investments in NSF support her research, fund her graduate students, and help accelerate scientific progress

are among the factors underlying NSF's recent budget increases from \$7.5 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2017, to \$7.8 billion in FY 2018, to a proposed \$8.2 billion in FY 2019.

APA Opposes Cuts to Nutrition Program (SNAP); Congress Rejects Farm Bill



In May, APA joined with advocacy partners to argue against the *Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018* ([H.R. 2](#)), also known as the Farm Bill. Thanks

APA's efforts on behalf of SNAP includes a [letter](#) to House leadership and an [action alert](#) to the APA Federal Action Network. The association also cosigned several coalition letters addressing the

in part to the collective advocacy efforts, on May 18th, the bill was rejected by the House of Representatives by a vote of 198-213.

H.R. 2 would make harmful cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the largest program in the domestic hunger safety net. If enacted, the Farm Bill would impose harsh new work and reporting requirements on millions of SNAP recipients. Those who could not comply with these requirements would lose benefits for up to 36 months. Up to two million people would have seen their benefits reduced or eliminated over the next 10 years, likely pushing them further into poverty. impact of the proposed cuts to SNAP on various populations ([disabilities](#), [women](#), and [LGBT](#)). The House is expected to revisit the bill again in the coming months, reportedly as soon as June 22.

APA Spearheads Effort to Ensure Criminal Justice Conversation Addresses Mental Health

APA, in conjunction with the American Psychiatric Association, Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA), Legal Action Center (LAC), and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), sponsored a congressional briefing on prison and reentry mental health on May 24th. The [briefing](#), *Innovations and Challenges in Providing Mental Health Services to People in Prison and Those Reentering the Community*, highlighted critical issues for criminal justice and mental health policy, practice, and research. Briefing's attendees heard from an interdisciplinary panel of experts:

- **Gabrielle de la Guéronnière**, JD, LAC, discussed how federal policy could help justice-involved individuals with mental health needs succeed in reentering the community from a secure facility.
- **Denny Kaemingk**, South Dakota Secretary of Corrections, highlighted reforms in South Dakota and ASCA's role in guiding state prison system reforms to better meet the needs of incarcerated individuals with mental health needs.
- **Angelo McClain**, PhD, LICSW, NASW, provided introductory remarks and framed the issue.



L-R: Angelo McClain, Gabrielle de la Gueronniere, Denny Kaemingk, Robert Morgan, and Altha Stewart

McClain also personalized the topic and urged attendees to think about criminal justice and mental health as involving all of our friends, family, and community members.

- **Robert Morgan**, PhD, Texas Tech University, explained that individuals in prison who do and do not have mental health needs tend to share [criminogenic risk factors](#)—i.e., risk factors for engaging in criminal behavior. Morgan presented evidence indicating there is much greater success in reducing re-offending among those with mental health needs when both their mental health and criminogenic needs are addressed.
- **Altha Stewart**, MD, University of Tennessee and American Psychiatric Association President, described the scale and scope of the problem. Stewart urged attendees to support interdisciplinary efforts to address issues at the intersection of mental health and criminal justice.

Additional supporters of the briefing included: Families Against Mandatory Minimums, National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors, National Association for Rural Mental Health, National Criminal Justice Association, and National Health Care for the Homeless Council.

APA staff will continue to work with event partners to ensure follow-through and ongoing advocacy on Capitol Hill. To participate in APA's criminal justice and related policy advocacy, please join the [Federal Action Network](#).



Congressional Briefing Marking International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia Held

On May 17th, APA co-hosted a congressional briefing ([video](#)) to mark the ***International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia***. The briefing was co-hosted with the Center for American Progress and the Fenway Institute. The Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus helped to organize it. The speakers, all psychologists, included: **Sean Cahill**, PhD; **Colt Keo-Meyer**, PhD; **Laura Durso**, PhD; and **Margaret Rosario**, PhD. **Clinton Anderson**, PhD, interim executive director of APA's Public Interest Directorate served as the moderator.

The panelists reviewed the current political landscape impacting sexual and gender minorities, explained psychological and public health evidence of both the harmful health effects of discriminatory policies and the protective effects of supportive policies, and suggested specific policy recommendations. A newly released issue brief, [Public Policies, Prejudice, and Sexual and Gender Minority Health](#) (PDF, 2.72MB) summarizes policy developments within the past year and describes legislative, administrative, and regulatory solutions.

Crisis in Older Adult Mental Health Discussed on Capitol Hill

On May 17th, the National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging (NCMHA), of which APA is a member, along with several other organizations hosted a Congressional briefing on the ***Crisis in Older Adult Mental Health***. Representatives Grace Napolitano (D-CA) and John Katko (R-NY), Co-Chairs of the House Mental Health Caucus, shared their personal stories and made remarks.

The briefing examined the emerging crisis of access to mental health services for older adults. Presenters included:

- **Stephen Bartels, MD, MS**, (Herman O. West Professor of Geriatrics and Professor of Psychiatry, Community and Family Medicine, and of Health Policy at The Dartmouth Institute) provided an overview of the issue highlighting that 5.6 to 8 million (14 to 20 percent) of older adults have a mental illness or substance abuse disorder. He recommended restored funding for SAMHSA's Older Americans Substance Abuse and Mental Health Technical Assistance Center as well as the National Evidence Based Practice Grant Program.



Sitting: **Bartels, Gray, and Kaskie**
Standing: **Reps. Katko and Napolitano**

- APA member, **Jacqueline Gray, PhD**, (Associate Director of Indigenous Programs, Center for Rural Health and Associate Professor, School of Medicine and Health Sciences' Center of Rural Health/Pathology, University of North Dakota) spoke of how racial and ethnic minority older adults are overrepresented in many subgroups at high risk for the development of mental disorders yet have less access to mental health services. Gray recommended building a culturally competent workforce, providing increased funding for elder abuse initiatives, and increasing rural broadband access for telehealth services.
- **Brian Kaskie, PhD**, (Associate Professor, Management and Policy, University of Iowa) provided several policy recommendations related to financing mental health services for older adults. Kaskie endorsed the concept of proportional appropriations, i.e., all existing federally-funded mental and behavioral health programs should include funding specifically for older adults proportionate to their share of the U.S. population.

First-Ever Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day Celebrated at SAMHSA

On May 18th, the National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging and APA again joined forces along with several organizations to host the first ever **Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day** at SAMHSA. The session included numerous speakers discussing the mental health of older adults. APA member, Dr. Jacqueline Gray, spoke about the cultural aspects that older adults face. Other speakers included: Moderator: **Paolo del Vecchio** (Director, Center for Mental Health Services, SAMHSA), **Lance Robertson** (Assistant Secretary for Aging and Administrator for the Administration for Community Living), and **Arne Owens** (Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use), among others. The SAMHSA session focused on framing the behavioral health needs of older adults and included a discussion of current best practices.

APA Science Student Council Takes Advocacy Campaign to Capitol Hill

In April, the [APA Science Student Council](#) (SSC) held an advocacy day on Capitol Hill to make the case for psychological science funding at the federal science agencies. The SSC is comprised of nine graduate student members, each representing a different area across the breadth of research disciplines within psychology. SSC members met with a total of 13 congressional offices representing their home districts and states.

To prepare SSC members for their afternoon of meetings on Capitol Hill, APA's Science government relations staff provided an advocacy training

session. In their meetings with Congressional offices, SSC members advocated for strong, stable, and predictable funding in fiscal year 2019 for the federal agencies that fund social and behavioral science, particularly the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. SSC members described their research, much of which is federally funded. Notably, the students also advocated support for this research by expressing opposition to legislation that singles out specific social and behavioral science grants or entire programs of research for cuts.

Department of Education Seeks Input on the Future Direction of the Rehabilitation Training Program



On May 4, the Department of Education issued a "[Request for information \(RFI\) on the Future Direction of the Rehabilitation Training Program](#)" in the Federal Register. **The deadline to submit comments is July 3, 2018.**

Specifically, the Department is seeking input on the "portfolio of grants supported under the Rehabilitation Long-Term Training, Rehabilitation Short-Term Training, and Innovative Rehabilitation Training Program authorities" to determine whether the program's goals are aligned with the Department of Education and the needs of State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies. **The information collected will be used by the Department to "determine whether any changes are needed in designing and implementing grant activities under this program, including the specific mix of activities supported each year."** The Department is looking for data, including specific examples and other relevant documentation to help it determine whether discretionary grants funded under these training programs are allied with the goals of the Department and the needs of State VR agencies.

The Department's FY 2016 funding opportunity announcement (FOA), *Rehabilitation Training, Rehabilitation Long-Term Training Program – Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling*, excluded psychology as a priority area.

The RFI is an opportunity to reiterate the need to restore rehabilitation psychology as a priority area of this program.

APA is also seeking your input to coordinate an Association response. We hope that you will share any submissions with APA. If you have comments that you would like for APA to consider, please send them to **Angela Sharpe**, Legislative and Federal Affairs Associate, Education Government Relations at asharpe@apa.org by **June 25th**.

Federal Funding Resources

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

Health Resources & Services Administration

- [Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#)
- [Faculty Loan Repayment Program](#)

National Institutes of Health

- [Research Training and Career Development Programs](#)
- [Grants and Funding](#)
- [NIH Director's Pioneer Award](#)

National Science Foundation

- [Funding Opportunities](#)
- [NSF Research Traineeship \(NRT\) program](#)
- [NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program \(GRFP\) - Graduate Research Internship Program \(GRIP\)](#)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

- [Funding Opportunities](#)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

- [Grant Announcements and Awards](#)
- [Tribal Behavioral Health Grant Program](#) – June 22
- [Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant Program](#) – June 29
- [Improving Access to Overdose Treatment](#) (OD Treatment Access)
- [Strategic Prevention Framework - Partnerships for Success](#) - July 6
- [Targeted Capacity Expansion: Medication Assisted Treatment—Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction](#) – July 9

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