

6/5/2008

THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION

THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION: A NATIONAL ADVOCACY VOICE FOR ELDER JUSTICE IN AMERICA

JOHN B. BREAUX: HONORARY CHAIR

ROBERT B. BLANCATO: NATIONAL COORDINATOR

Coalition Members:

ELDER JUSTICE ACT PASSES HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

In an historic development, the House Judiciary Committee by a unanimous vote passed and reported out H.R. 1783, the Elder Justice Act. It is the first time in the history of the Elder Justice Act that a House Committee has acted on the legislation. In addition, the Judiciary Committee also passed and reported out H.R. 5352, the Elder Abuse Victims Act of 2008, sponsored by Rep. Sestak (D-PA) The Elder Justice Coalition, had supported this legislation and worked with Rep. Sestak on its introduction.

H.R. 1783 included several amendments including one offered by Chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, Bobby Scott (D-VA), to make clarifications and technical changes to the bill. Two amendments, offered by Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), related to expanding efforts at combating telemarketing and internet fraud, were also passed. The fourth amendment, offered jointly by Reps Maxine Waters (D-CA), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) and Adam Schiff (D-CA), to reauthorize and expand the Alzheimer's Missing Patient Alert program also passed. An additional amendment proposed by Rep. Yarmuth(D-KY) will be taken up with the bill when it comes before the House floor.

From this point both H.R. 1783 and H.R. 5352 are eligible for consideration by the full House. It is not clear what degree of consolidation will be done relative to these bills.

Meanwhile the Elder Justice Coalition continues to advocate with the Senate Finance Committee to have S. 1070, the Senate Elder Justice Act, included in the Medicare bill to come before the Senate in the near future. A letter we sent to Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley requesting consideration of the EJA and the criminal background check legislation sponsored by Senator Herb Kohl is attached.

The Coalition commends the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, and the full Judiciary Committee for their prompt action on the Elder Justice Act. In addition, the Coalition salutes the hard and dedicated work of Rep. Rahm Emanuel, the author of the Elder Justice Act.