

2/12/2009

THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION

Elder Abuse Legislation Update

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

JOHN B. BREAUX: HONORARY CHAIR

ROBERT B. BLANCATO: NATIONAL COORDINATOR

HOUSE PASSES FIRST ELDER ABUSE LEGISLATION OF 2009

By a vote of 397-25, the House, on February 11th, passed H.R. 448: The Elder Abuse Victims Act of 2009. The measure was authored by Representative Joe Sestak (D-PA) and co-sponsored by:

Rep. John Conyers (MI-14)
Rep. Elijah Cummings (MD-7)
Rep. Peter King (NY-3)
Rep. Ted Poe (TX-2)
Rep. Bobby Scott (VA-3)

The bill is identical to legislation which passed the House in 2008, but was not acted on by the Senate. H.R. 448 is a small part of the Elder Justice Act. The bill would:

- Protect seniors in the United States from elder abuse by established specialized elder abuse prosecution and research programs
- Provide training to prosecutors and other law enforcement related to elder abuse prevention and protections
- Establish programs that provide for emergency crisis response teams to combat elder abuse.

To view the text of the bill, visit www.thomas.loc.gov and search for H.R. 448. The Elder Justice Coalition supported the legislation, and its National Coordinator Bob Blancato testified on behalf of the bill before the House Judiciary Committee in 2008.

The bill now goes to the Senate where a comparable bill is expected to be introduced

The Coalition is encouraged with this first step taken by the House regarding elder justice. Our primary goal continues to be the enactment of the complete Elder Justice Act as well as the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act. Updates on these bills appear later in the report.

HOUSE PASSES SILVER ALERT LEGISLATION

The House, by voice vote on Tuesday February 10th, passed H.R. 632, the Silver Alert bill. The measure was authored by Representative Lloyd Doggett (TX) with 22 co-sponsors. The bill would enhance and integrate Silver Alert plans throughout the United States, as well as authorizing grants for the assistance of organizations to find missing adults.

The EJC lent its support to this legislation and during House floor consideration Rep. Doggett quoted from a statement from the Coalition which noted that a missing older adult can easily become a victim of elder abuse.

The bill now moves to the Senate. To view the text of the bill, visit www.thomas.loc.gov and search for H.R. 632.

2/12/2009

THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION

ELDER JUSTICE ACT

Work continues toward the introduction of the bi-partisan Elder Justice Act in both the House and the Senate. The bills are expected to be identical to the bills from the 110th Congress (H.R. 1783 and S. 1070).

The outlook for passage of this legislation is viewed as more positive for two reasons. The first is the expected support of the legislation from the Obama administration. The second is the amount of legislative history that has already been established on the bill, which should allow for a quicker pace of consideration. This includes passage of the bill last year in both the Senate Finance and the House Judiciary Committees.

Once the legislation is introduced, the Elder Justice Coalition will be working to get House and Senate co-sponsors on the bill and move toward expedited consideration in the House and Senate.

OTHER ELDER JUSTICE LEGISLATION

On February 10th, 2009, Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY) introduced H.R. 973, which would establish pilot programs that provide for emergency crisis response teams to combat elder abuse. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary. The coalition will continue to monitor the status of this legislation and all other legislation introduced as it pertains to the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older Americans.

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

JOHN B.
BREAUX:
HONORARY
CHAIR

ROBERT B.
BLANCATO:
NATIONAL
COORDINATOR