

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**

Elder Justice Act Introduced in Senate

On Thursday, April 2, 2009, the Elder Justice Act was introduced in the Senate. The bill, S. 795 was authored by Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and co sponsored by Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI), Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), and Senator Olympia J. Snowe (R-ME). S. 795 is identical to the Elder Justice Act that was passed unanimously by the Senate Finance Committee in 2008.

The Elder Justice Act:

- Would provide federal resources to support State and community efforts on the front lines dedicated to fighting elder abuse with scarce resources and fragmented systems.
- Assuring adequate public-private infrastructure and resources to prevent, detect, treat, understand, intervene in and, where appropriate, prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

For more information on the bill and to read the full text, please go to the Library of Congress website at www.thomas.gov.

In the 110th Congress, the Elder Justice Act was co-sponsored by 33 Senators. The EJC will be working on both the national and grassroots level to make sure these co sponsors get behind this bill again. The following are the Senate members who supported the Elder Justice Act in 2008 (and continue to serve in the Senate in the 111th Congress):

Bayh, Evan (D-IN)
Bingaman, Jeff (D-NM)
Bond, Christopher S. (R-MO)
Boxer, Barbara (D-CA)
Brown, Sherrod (D-OH)
Cantwell, Maria (D-WA)
Casey, Robert P., Jr (D-PA)
Chambliss, Saxby (R-GA)
Collins, Susan M. (R-ME)
Durbin, Richard (D-IL)
Enzi, Michael B. (R-WY)
Johnson, Tim (D-SD)
Kerry, John F. (D-MA)
Kohl, Herb (D-WI)
Lieberman, Joseph I. (D-CT)
Lincoln, Blanche L. (D-AR)

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Mikulski, Barbara A. (D-MD)
Murray, Patty (D-WA)
Nelson, Bill (D-FL)
Reed, Jack (D-RI)
Rockefeller, John D., IV (D-WV)
Schumer, Charles E (D-NY)
Snowe, Olympia J. (R-ME)
Specter, Arlen (R-PA)
Stabenow, Debbie (D-MI)
Wyden, Ron (D-OR)

The House version of this bill is expected to be introduced in the near future.

OTHER ELDER JUSTICE INITIATIVES

The introduction of the Elder Justice Act broadens Congressional involvement in elder justice issues. There are now a total of four different bills pending before Congress that relate to Elder Justice.

H.R. 448 - Elder Abuse Victims Act—This bill was passed in the House on February 11, 2009 and will be considered by the Senate Judiciary Committee in the near future. This act, sponsored by Rep. Joe Sestak, D-PA, provides grant funding for elder abuse prevention and assistance programs as well as training, technical assistance, and support to law enforcement officials in catching predators who prey on the elderly. This legislation is identical legislation that passed the full House last year but died in the Senate.

H.R. 632 - Silver Alert Act— On February 10, 2009, the House of Representatives passed the National Silver Alert Act of 2009 sponsored by Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-TX) and 22 Co-Sponsors. It is a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Silver Alert plans throughout the United States and to authorize grants for the assistance of organizations to find missing adults.

S. 631 - Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act of 2009 - On March 18, 2009, the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act, authored by Senator Kohl (D-WI) and Senator Collins (R-ME), was introduced. . The bill would create a national background check system to prevent those with criminal records from serving in a long-term care facility. This legislation is identical to the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act of 2007 which passed the Senate Finance Committee in 2008.

4/03/09

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The most comprehensive of the four bills is the Elder Justice Act. The EJC will continue to work to advance all these bills, especially the Elder Justice Act so we can make a concerted effort to reduce elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

NEW REPORT ISSUED ON ELDER FINANCIAL ABUSE

In March, a new report was issued by the MetLife Mature Market Institute and the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse entitled, Broken Trust: Elders, Family, and Finances.

Its main findings included the fact that elder financial abuse costs its victims \$2.6 billion a year and that at least 1 million people a year are victimized.

The report was based on a review of more than 1,000 news articles from the National Center of Elder Abuse Newsfeed compiled between April and June of 2008 from newspapers and media around the country. Close to one third of the articles related to elder financial abuse.