

Legislative Update: February 17, 2010

THANK YOU to Legislative Action Committee (ELAN) Chair Larry Beckett and the entire ELAN Legislative Action Team for organizing a very successful **2010 Social Work Day at the Legislature!** Over 130 students, faculty and professional social workers from around the state attended on February 3rd to learn about legislation important to social workers, hear from and observe legislators in action, meet with their elected representatives on issues of concern to social workers, hear proclamations of the social work profession read on the House and Senate floors, and converse with legislators during our legislative reception honoring the social work profession. We had some terrific feedback on the day and Legislators were very well aware that social workers follow public policy! *Thank you to all who attended!!*

ELAN Legislative Action Committee

R. Larry Beckett, MSW, Committee Chair
Jeannie Brenneman, MSW
Nancy Burkhammer, MSW
Steve Burton, MSW, Chapter President-Elect
Bethany Ellard, BSW
Diane Market, MSW
Kelli Phelps, MSW
Kim Tieman, MSW, Chapter President

Staff

Sam Hickman, MSW, Chief Executive Officer
Elena Bailey, MSW, Program Associate

Legislative Stats

Day of Session	31st
Days Remaining	29
Bills Introduced: (Including 2009 House Carryover Bills)	1716

The following is a summary of NASW West Virginia Legislative priorities and specific bills we are tracking in these areas.

To view any of the bills below visit: <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/live.cfm>

- From the menu select 'Bill Status' then 'Bill Tracking.'
- Under 'Quick Bill Search' type the bill number in the box and click on 'submit.'

- When the next screen comes up look down the page to ‘Bill Text’ click on ‘Introduced Version’ or, if applicable ‘Committee Substitute’ (the most recent version of the bill).

SOCIAL WORKER SAFETY, RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

- Improving Safety:
 - ✓ Minimize solo field visits by hiring more DHHR *Health and Human Services Aides* or similar measures
 - ✓ Promote inter-agency risk assessment and safety strategy/technology collaboration
- Professional Social Worker Recruitment and Retention:
 - ✓ Hiring Incentives: Recruit professional social workers via a dual Civic Service register; sign on bonuses, differential salaries, loan forgiveness, tuition reimbursement, etc
 - ✓ Create a *Master Protective Service Worker* Civil Service class to improve client outcomes, mentor/retain junior employees and establish an advance direct practice career pathway
- Expand consumer access to mental health services through direct Medicaid reimbursement for Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers; make provisions for supervised clinical social workers and students
- [HB 4179](#): Equal Pay Commission: Add legislators & remove expiration date; budgetary: Increase allocation
- [HB 3257](#): Health professions loan forgiveness program, including social workers
- Appropriate state matching funds to maximize Federal Title IV-E Child Welfare training resources

CHILD WELFARE & JUVENILE JUSTICE

- [HB 4164](#): “Jacob’s Law” Creates enhanced specialized foster care pilot projects in four regions of the state
- [HB 4454](#) / [SB 552](#): Establish an independent Child Advocate Office to oversee & improve the state’s efforts in Child Protective Services, Youth Services, Foster Care, Kinship Care, Adoption and Juvenile Justice Services
- Provide funding to pilot the existing Child Care provider quality review rating system provision; Promote, recognize and reward national accreditation for private providers of child welfare services
- Foster Care: Continue to improve reimbursement rates to increase capacity, provide least restrictive, community-based care and improve ‘aging out’ transitional services; link rates to an inflation index
- [HB 4419](#): Meet existing caseload standards; Promote proven, evidence-based, measurable outcomes
- Increase early intervention funding: Birth-to-3, In-Home Family Education, Right From the Start, School-Based Health
- Enforce consistent protocols in Multidisciplinary Investigative and Treatment Teams

HEALTH CARE, MENTAL HEALTH, CHIP & MEDICAID

- [HB 4373](#): Expand CHIP eligibility by eliminating the 12-month prior insurance coverage ‘look back’ period
- [HB 4161](#)/[SB 329](#): Create an Office of Minority Issues to address health disparities and related minority issues
- [HB 4272](#): Expand “Prescription Fairness Act” coverage to dependent minor children

- [HB 4253/HB 2100](#): Increase the beer tax to fund substance abuse treatment, services and prevention programs
- [HB 2431](#): Emergency contraception education program; WV also needs a Medicaid Family Planning Waiver
- [HB 4712](#): Require public notice and comment for Medicaid state plan/ waiver changes and DHHR rules
- [HB 4215](#): Prohibiting gender discrimination in health care insurance plans
- Promote consumer-centered improvements in Medicaid's 'Mountain Health Choices' program: Default children into 'Enhanced' benefits, Match benefit design with evidence-based practices, etc
- Position West Virginia to take full advantage of Federal Health Care Reform incentives

ECONOMIC SECURITY, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

- [HB 4332/SB 569](#): Unemployment benefits for part-time workers, certain domestic violence cases & care givers
- [HB 4161](#): Create an Office of Minority Issues to address economic equality, security and social justice
- [SB 171](#): Create a State Earned Income Tax Credit: Help low income families put more into the economy
- [HB 4130](#): Publicly Financed Elections: Create pilots and programs so as to minimize special interest influence
- [SB 437](#): Voluntary Retirement Accounts: Help small business help their employees save for retirement
- Child Custody disputes: Reaffirm and maintain the "best interest of the child" standard
- Support Equality, Diversity and Social and Economic Justice, and oppose all forms of discrimination

Plan NOW to Attend!

2010 Spring CE Conference for Social Workers, April 28, 29, 30, 2010, Charleston Civic Center. [Call for Proposals form now online at www.NASWWV.org](http://www.NASWWV.org)

Thank you!

**BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD
THE POWER OF SOCIAL WORK!**

Membership dues support the work that we do. Thank you! Your involvement is very important to us. If your membership is about to expire, you can renew online and continue receiving the benefits of NASW membership by visiting: naswwv.org.

**Susan Sobkoviak
WV- National Association of Social Workers
Website: www.NASWWV.org
304 345-6279**