

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS - WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER

2011 Legislative Action Priorities

ACTION AGENDA

- **Protect the Public**
 - ✓ Strengthen the Social Work licensing law by adding Scope of Practice language and other improvements
 - **Health Care**
 - ✓ Expand CHIP eligibility to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level; Eliminate the 12-month prior insurance coverage 'look back' period; Extend CHIP eligibility to the children of state employees
 - ✓ Increase the tax on tobacco products and dedicate the revenue to prevention, cessation and health care
 - ✓ Position West Virginia to take full advantage of the Affordable Care Act (health care reform)
 - **Unemployment Modernization**
 - ✓ Draw down \$22 million in federal funding by expanding unemployment benefits to cover part-time workers and workers re-entering the workforce after lapses due to domestic violence or care giving
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ADDITIONAL INTERESTS

Social Work Recruitment, Retention, Safety and Other Professional issues

- Create an advanced practice career path in WV Civil Service positions requiring a social work license to enhance services to the public by retaining experienced practitioners and mentoring junior employees
 - Give School Social Workers the same salary incentive available to other professional school employees
 - Expand hiring incentives: Sign-on bonuses, differential salaries, loan forgiveness, tuition reimbursement, etc
 - Hire additional DHHR *Health and Human Services Aides* to increase safety and reduce workloads
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Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice

- Support & fund the Statewide Service Array Project recommendations identifying essential community services
 - Establish an independent Child Advocate Office to oversee & improve the state's child welfare efforts
 - Appropriate state matching funds to maximize Federal Title IV-E Child Welfare training resources
 - Provide funding to pilot the existing Child Care provider quality review rating system provision
 - Fund early intervention: *In-Home Family Education, Right From the Start, School-Based Health and WV Birth-to-Three*
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Health, Mental Health, CHIP & Medicaid

- Veterans Care: Continue the Rural Health Education Program \$100,000 mental health services appropriation
 - Expand "Prescription Fairness Act" coverage to dependent minor children
 - Increase the beer tax to fund substance abuse treatment, services and prevention programs
 - Promote emergency contraception education programs
 - Require public notice and comment for Medicaid state plan/waiver changes and DHHR rules
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Economic Security, Equality, Diversity & Social Justice

- Create a State Earned Income Tax Credit to help low income families put more into the local economy
 - Create the Herbert Henderson Office of Minority Issues to address health, social and economic disparities
 - Create Voluntary Retirement Accounts to help small business help their employees save for retirement
 - Support legislation promoting Equality, Diversity, & Social & Economic Justice; oppose all forms of discrimination
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POLICY INITIATIVES

Social Work Recruitment, Retention, Safety and Other Professional issues

- Reestablish the hiring of professional Social Workers via a dual Civic Service register system
 - Promote inter-agency risk assessment & safety strategy/technology collaboration; share with private sector
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Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice

- Promote the development of evidence-based caseload standards that lead to positive outcomes
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Health, Mental Health, CHIP & Medicaid

- Expand consumer access to quality mental health services through direct Medicaid reimbursement to Independent Clinical Social Workers and for services of supervised master social workers
 - Promote consumer-centered improvements in West Virginia's Medicaid program
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Economic Security, Equality, Diversity & Social Justice

- Publicly Financed Elections: Encourage pilots and programs to minimize special interest influence in elections
- Child Custody disputes: Reaffirm and maintain the "best interest of the child" standard

***NOTE:** 'Additional Interests' are issues that may also be introduced as bills and discussed during the 2011 Legislative Session and would require legislative action. We will follow these developments and work to pass good legislation and defeat bad legislation. 'Policy Initiatives' are issues that more appropriately require discussion and collaboration with the other branches of government, state agencies, the private sector, etc, and would not typically require legislative action. Policy Initiatives that become legislative issues will be transferred to the list of Legislative Action Priorities and acted upon accordingly.*

