

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

Steve Burton, MSW, LCSW

Dear Colleagues in the NASW, West Virginia Chapter

It's January, which means the beginning of the 2011 Session of the West Virginia State Legislature! As usual, NASW-WV is involved in many legislative activities. Chief Executive Officer Sam Hickman has been participating in many legislative strategy meetings on children's issues, health care, mental health, domestic violence, and social and economic justice issues. NASW-WV is very lucky to have at its helm someone who is well known to legislators and very involved in legislative issues that are extremely important to Social Workers throughout the Mountain State, and those we serve.

This year is an especially important one for Social Workers because our licensing law has been placed in front of the legislature for review. The bill - HB 2525 - was introduced this week as part of a planned effort by the House Government Organization Committee to bring all professional licensing codes into compliance with modern practices. In addition, a review by the Legislative Auditor several years ago recommended that 'scope of practice' language be added to define what tasks a license holder can perform under each type of license. A suggestion made by NASW, WV would allow LGSW and LCSW license holders who are actively working towards the LICSW license to provide clinical services under supervision. Finally, a two-year discussion among major private sector employers of Social Workers, the WV DHHR Bureau for Children & Families (the largest employer of Social Workers in the state), the WV Board of Social Work Examiners, Social Work Education Programs, and NASW, WV resulted in several recommendations being incorporated into the bill, including the creation of a provisional license to replace the current temporary license. This two-year effort of exploration and cooperation would not have been possible had not Social Workers much like you become involved and decided to act on an opportunity to strengthen our profession. *Thank you!*

Lastly, we are pleased to announce and begin a partnership with **Frank Hartman** of Hartman Law & Government Relations to provide supplemental lobbying services. Frank will assist CEO **Sam Hickman** in advocating our **2011 legislative Action Priorities**. Although former staff lobbyist **Susan Sobkoviak** moved to Colorado several years ago she remains involved in a consultancy role on legislation and policy issues. You will notice messages from each of them during the session. The **2011 Legislative Action Priorities** are online at www.NASWWV.org.

Please let us know if you have any questions, and please STAY INVOLVED in the legislative process! Email me at steve@1800gambler.net or email NASW, WV at Mail@NASWWV.org

THANK YOU for your membership in the NASW, West Virginia Chapter, and for ALL you do for our profession and the citizens of our state!

Sincerely,

Steve Burton, MSW, LCSW

President, Board of Directors, National Association of Social Workers, West Virginia Chapter