



ASAM Advocacy News

January 2, 2008

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ASAM Mission

Increase access to and improve the quality of addictions treatment.

Educate physicians, medical and osteopathic students, and the public.

Promote research and prevention.

Establish addiction medicine as a specialty recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties.

ASAM advocates for parity in:

1. Training, credentialing and privileging
2. Access to treatment
3. Payment for treatment

Contact ASAM:

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In the News

Congress to Vote on Parity Bill in 2008. Congress did not vote on H.R. 1424, the House parity bill, before it adjourned the first session of the 110th Congress. The leadership of the House supports this legislation and hopes to bring it before the full House of Representatives early in the second session of the 110th Congress. The Senate voted in favor of its parity bill in February of 2007.

ASAM members need to keep pressure on Congress to move the House bill forward! Please contact your US Representative and urge him/her to encourage House leadership to bring this bill before the full House of Representatives for a vote.

President Signs \$555 Billion Funding Bill. On December 26, 2007, President Bush signed a \$555 billion omnibus appropriations bill that funds, among many other programs, addiction treatment, prevention, and research programs. Despite a 1.7% cut to all Labor-HHS-Education federal spending, addiction-related programs fared well as compared to comparable mental health programs. In general, funding for the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment block grant received level funding for 2008 (as compared to 2007 levels). The same is true for SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment and its Center for Substance Abuse Prevention FY 2008 funding. Funding for the National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse increased minimally while funding for the National Institute on Drug Abuse fell slightly.

FDA Tobacco Regulation Bill Awaits House, Senate Approval. Neither the House (H.R. 1108) nor the Senate (S. 625) FDA tobacco regulation bills cleared their respective chambers before Congress adjourned for 2007. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee voted in favor of the bill on August 1, 2007 but the full Senate has yet to vote on the bill. The House Energy and Commerce Committee is expected to vote on the House version when Congress returns. So far, S. 625 has 55 cosponsors and H.R. 1108 has 217.

Advocacy Efforts at the State Level

NJ Parity Advocates Urge Assembly Action. New Jersey's mental health and addiction parity bill, A-2512, was not among the 100+ bills considered by the New Jersey General Assembly during a final voting session on December 13, 2007. Advocates are urging Speaker Roberts and the General Assembly to vote on this bill before the current assembly session closes on January 7, 2008.

Upcoming Events

ageier@asam.org

Donald J. Kurth,
MD, FASAM
Chair, Legislative
Advocacy
Committee

American Medical Association National Advocacy Conference April 1-2, 2008, Grand Hyatt Washington, Washington, D.C. [[Information and Registration](#)]

ASAM Medical-Scientific Conference April 10-13, 2008, Sheraton Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada [[Information](#)]

American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting May 3-8, 2008, Washington DC Convention Center, Washington, D.C. [[Information and Registration](#)]

Have events that you'd like to see posted in this newsletter? Please send your suggestions to advocacy@asam.org.

Special Notes

Planning to attend ASAM's Annual Medical-Scientific Conference this Spring in Toronto? Apply for new or renewed passports today! Due to recent legislative changes, passport processing times have increased. Please plan accordingly. Visit the US Department of State website for information on how to obtain a US passport. [[US Department of State/Passport](#)]

ASAM's Director of Government Relations will be out on maternity leave for 12 weeks, starting on or around January 23, 2008. She will be checking in one day a week while out on leave. For urgent matters, please contact Eileen McGrath at emcgrath@asam.org.

New to Grassroots Advocacy? If you've never lobbied Congress or otherwise advocated for a cause, it can seem like an intimidating endeavor. ASAM's government relations department is here to help you for your first time or your fiftieth. Did you know ASAM hosts an advocacy website [[ASAM Advocacy Website](#)]? On it, you'll find:

- information about ASAM **advocacy events**
- updates on current federal and state **legislation of interest**
- an **advocacy toolkit** complete with: an advocacy tutorial, instructions on how to contact Congress and what to say, a glossary of advocacy terms (what does "mark-up mean, what happens when a bill is "hot-lined", etc), and relevant support materials and reports.
- the latest edition of **ASAM's Advocacy e-newsletter**
- ASAM **public policy statements**

What Are Your Addiction Policy Issues?

ASAM's leadership needs your feedback to help determine ASAM's legislative policy priorities. Please send your responses to advocacy@asam.org and indicate what federal (and/or state) healthcare policies are priorities for you.

**In your email, please provide as much detail about the policy and the problems/solutions associated with it, as possible. Thank you!

American Society of Addiction Medicine

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