



ASAM Advocacy News

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

In the News

House Approves Mental Health and Addiction Parity Bill. The U.S. House of Representatives approved H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, on March 5, 2008. The Senate passed its parity bill in September of 2007. House and Senate leaders are currently working out the differences between the two bills. Parity advocates feel hopeful that a House/Senate compromise bill will be sent to the President this year.

ASAM members need to keep pressure on Congress to pass a parity bill this year! Please contact your [U.S. Representative](#) and your [U.S. Senators](#) and urge them to pass the strongest parity bill possible this year.

Second Chance Act Becomes Law. President Bush signed H.R. 1593, the "Second Chance Act of 2007", into law on April 9, 2008. This bill seeks to help states and localities better address the needs of individuals reentering the community from the criminal justice system. The centerpiece of the Second Chance Act is the reauthorization of a Department of Justice grant program for people returning to the community from incarceration.

House Energy and Commerce Committee Approves FDA Tobacco Regulation Bill. On April 2, 2008, the House Energy and Commerce Committee overwhelmingly approved H.R. 1108, the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act. This bill is considered to have strong bipartisan support in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee voted in favor of the bill on August 1, 2007. Advocates are urging the full House and Senate to vote on their respective bills before the end of the current Congressional session.

Advocacy Efforts at the State Level

SC Supreme Court Reverses Homicide Conviction of Regina

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McKnight. On May 12, 2008, the SC Supreme Court overturned the 2001 conviction of Regina McKnight. Ms. McKnight was convicted of homicide in 2001, based on the argument that her cocaine use was to blame for the stillbirth she suffered in 1999. ASAM was one of many local and national organizations who signed an amici curiae on her behalf, challenging the state's evidence against her.

Upcoming Events

American Psychological Association Annual Convention. August 14-17, 2008. Boston Convention Center, Boston, MA. [[Information and Registration](#)]

NAADAC--The Association for Addiction Professionals Annual Recovery for a Lifetime Conference. August 28-31, 2008. Sheraton Overland Park Hotel, Overland Park, KS. [[Information and Registration](#)]

SAMHSA National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. September, 2008. Look for your Recovery Month Toolkits in the mail soon. [[Recovery Month Information](#)]

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


Special Notes

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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