



THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION

"A NATIONAL ADVOCACY VOICE SUPPORTING ELDER JUSTICE IN AMERICA"

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In this Edition

- Elder Justice Bills Clear Congress, Obama to Sign Into Law

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A National Advocacy Voice for Elder Justice in America

622 Member Coalition

John B. Breaux
Honorary Chair

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ELDER JUSTICE BILLS CLEAR CONGRESS, OBAMA TO SIGN INTO LAW

The House of Representatives last night gave final Congressional approval to **the Elder Justice Act and the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act** as part of health care reform legislation thus enacting what the non partisan 622 member Elder Justice Coalition called, "**The most comprehensive federal legislation ever to combat elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.**" Coalition National Coordinator Bob Blancato called the bills "signature achievements within a landmark bill." The bill now goes to the President for his signature which is expected later this week.

The **Elder Justice Act** was added into the Senate health care bill by Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-Arkansas) a co-author of the measure and a member of the Finance Committee. The bill's sponsor is Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah.) The **Patient Safety** legislation was added by Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-Michigan) on behalf of the bill's author Senator Herb Kohl (D-Wisconsin.)

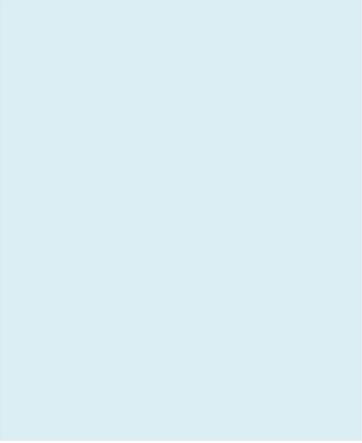
The main provisions of the Elder Justice Act include:

***Adult Protective Services (APS) funding.** Provides \$400 million (\$100 million per year) in first-time dedicated funding for adult protective services. Provides \$100 million (\$25 million annually) for state demonstration grants to test a variety of methods to improve APS.

*Provides \$32.5 million (over 4 years) in **grants to support the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** and an additional \$40 million (\$10 million annually) in training programs for national organizations and State long-term care ombudsman programs.

*Establishes an **Elder Justice Coordinating Council** to make recommendations to the Secretary of HHS on the coordination of activities of federal, state, local and private agencies and entities relating to elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. Recommendations contained in report are due in 2 years.

The **Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act** creates a national program of **criminal background checks** for persons seeking employment in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.



Blancato said, “The Elder Justice Coalition is pleased that Congress has recognized and responded to the growing national problem of elder abuse with the passage of these bills. With estimates as high as 5 million cases and with victims of elder financial abuse losing \$2.5 billion a year, it was long overdue to act.”

The House Elder Justice Act was authored by Rep. Pete King (NY) and co-authored by Rep. Janice Schakowsky (IL) and Rep. Tammy Baldwin (WI.)