



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Chartered State Affiliates  
FROM: Susan H. Connors, President and CEO  
DATE: February 6, 2006  
RE: Response President Bush's 2007 Budget

On Monday, President George W. Bush released a proposed budget for Federal Fiscal Year 2007. Just like last year, The White House has again proposed the complete elimination of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Federal TBI Program, which provides grants to state agencies and protection and advocacy organizations to improve access to health and other services for individuals with TBI and their families.

The Brain Injury Association of America is perplexed by the Administration's budget recommendation. In last week's State of the Union address, the President pledged to support our troops in Iran and Afghanistan. Leading national newspapers and radio talk shows are still prominently featuring the blast brain injuries sustained by ABC News reporters Woodruff and Vogt. Just weeks ago, the final Congressional vote was cast to restore \$9 million in funding for HRSA's TBI Program. And just weeks from now, the Institute of Medicine's evaluation of HRSA's TBI Program will be released.

Clearly, the President's zeroing out of the TBI Program is at odds with other policy makers, the news media, and the apparent sympathies of the American public. The Association will work vigorously to restore funding for HRSA's TBI Program, joining with coalition partners at the national level and calling on the highly effective state affiliate grassroots advocacy network to educate Members of Congress as to the need for and value of the Federal TBI Program.

In January, the Brain Injury Association of America "snail mailed" a letter to the members of the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force to thank them for their support and encourage them to stay involved in the Task Force. Appended to the bottom of this message is a copy of that letter. We encourage your affiliate to send a similar communication to Task Force members from your state.

Next week, the Association will send a Brain Injury Awareness Month kit to each member of Congress. We will notify you of the date the kit is mailed so that you can take this opportunity to furnish your representatives with state-specific information.

On February 23, 2006, the Association will host a national teleconference with state affiliate leaders to discuss our policy priorities for 2006, which include: (1) reauthorization and full funding of the TBI Act; (2) increased support for the TBI Model Systems; (3) improved services

and supports for active duty military and veterans; and (4) expanded membership in the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force.

Affiliate leaders will receive more information regarding the national policy teleconference as well as pdf versions of BIAA's fact sheets on the issues. The fact sheets will also be posted to our website on or before March 1.

On March 8, 2006, BIA of America will join with other national organizations to increase understanding of TBI at a Congressional Brain Injury Task Force Awareness Fair, followed later in the evening by a reception for Members of Congress and their staff.

Throughout the spring and summer, the Association will post alerts with detailed instructions for specific activities in support of full funding for all TBI programs and for continuation of the TBI Act, the only federal law specifically targeted to traumatic brain injury.

The very nature of successful advocacy requires consistent and constant effort. President Bush's budget recommendation is only the first step in an annual process that spans eight to ten months each year. There's no doubt that our collective persistence will be necessary, but I remain optimistic that with your help we can again restore funding for the Federal TBI Program.

On behalf of BIAA's Board of Directors and staff, I thank you sincerely for the advocacy work you do at both the state and national level. Please know that together we have created a better future and we will continue to do so.

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January 19, 2006

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ House Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_:

On behalf of the Brain Injury Association of America and the 5.3 million Americans who live with a permanent disability as a result of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), we want to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for all that you have done during this past year as a member of the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force.

With your support, the Congressional Brain Injury Task Force has helped improve the lives of Americans impacted by brain injury by advocating for common sense policy changes and federal funding for critical TBI Act Programs. We are proud that the Task Force has expanded over the past year and has continually spoken with one voice to help to bring about needed federal policies and awareness of brain injury in Congress and throughout the nation.

We look forward to continuing our work together in the busy months and years ahead. Again, thank you for your efforts on our behalf.

Sincerely,

Mark J. Ashley, ScD, CCC-SLP  
Chairman, Board of Directors

Susan H. Connors  
President/CEO