

REAUTHORIZE AND FULLY FUND THE TBI ACT



IMPROVE AND EXPAND THE TBI ACT

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) administers the TBI Act funding. It is used for the TBI State Partnership Grant Program, which helps states increase access to services and supports for individuals with TBI throughout their lifespan. It is also used for the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) TBI Grant Program, which helps states provide advocacy services for people with brain injury. Currently 31 states receive TBI State grants, and they are severely underfunded, as are all the P&A grants.

BIAA urges Congress to:

- Expand the eligibility criteria for programs to include hypoxic and other acquired brain injuries;
- Ease the state match requirement from 50% to 25%;
- Allow P&A access into VA facilities and federal prisons;
- Require the Health and Human Services Secretary to examine the evidence base of brain injury as a chronic condition.
- Increase funding for the TBI Act to \$25 million, and appropriate
 - \$19 million to the State Grant Program so all states can participate (an increase of \$11 million), and
 - \$6 million to the P&A Grant Program (an increase of \$3.5 million).

FULLY FUND THE CDC TBI PROGRAM

The TBI Act authorizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to collect data and conduct public education and research. The TBI Program Reauthorization Act of 2018 further authorized the establishment of a National Concussion Surveillance System; a pilot indicated much higher levels of brain injury than have been reported from other large, national datasets. Their work needs to be fully funded to truly grasp the scope of the issue and continue its vitally important work in this area.

BIAA urges Congress to reauthorize \$11.75 million in CDC TBI Programs funding, and appropriate:

- \$6.72 million for the TBI program within the CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC), and
- \$5 million for the National Concussion Surveillance System.

BRAIN INJURY IS A CHRONIC CONDITION

Every year, at least 2.8 million Americans sustain a traumatic brain injury. While most of them fall into the "mild" category, they can cause temporary and permanent neurological impairment. There are more than 5 million people living with a permanent brain injury-related disability – one in 60 Americans.

Brain injury is viewed by healthcare systems and the public as a one-time event, rather than the beginning of what can be persistent medical, physical cognitive and behavioral effects. The idea that brain injury can permanently change a person – their capabilities, their personality, their ability to work and socialize as they once did – is not something most people can understand.

Extensive research has demonstrated brain injury is not just an acute injury, but a chronic condition that affects far more than the brain; it may cause associated conditions that can increase health care costs and complicate recovery. The chronic, long-term effects of brain injury are wide-ranging, and can include fatigue, sensitivity to noise and light, memory loss, mobility issues, chronic migraines, trouble with focus and executive functioning, depression, and anxiety.

Having brain injury recognized as a chronic condition would mean more services and supports across the lifespan; it would open new avenues to treatment and research; and it would go a long way toward educating the public and correcting misconceptions about a condition that impacts millions of Americans.

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