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From: Amy Gotwals [agotwals@n4a.org]
Sent: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 4:24 PM
To: laura@nysaaaa.org
Subject: Advocacy Alert: Urgent Need for Letters on Project 2020



May 27, 2009

URGENT
Reach Out to Your Senators This Week!
Ask Them to Support Efforts to Include *Project 2020*
in Health Reform

This week, Congress is in recess for Memorial Day, returning to Washington on June 1. This recess is a perfect opportunity to make visits with your Senators' regional office staff and share letters of support on n4a and NASUA's legislative proposal, *Project 2020*.

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) continues to champion *Project 2020* in Senate Finance Committee "walk-through" meetings to discuss policy options for health care reform. This is a most opportune time for grassroots advocates to influence these discussions in Washington before the Finance Committee marks up its legislation during the month of June.

We cannot stress enough how critical it is that you take action this week to raise support for *Project 2020* as a natural fit in health reform.

We encourage advocates to customize the sample letter below with state and local information that makes that case for why all three elements of *Project 2020*—person-centered access to information; evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention; and enhanced nursing home diversion services—belong in the Senate Finance Committee's health care reform package.

Action Requested:

→ Customize the sample letter below and share it with your Senators' offices (local and Washington, DC).

Send a copy of the letter to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) and

Ranking Member Charles Grassley (R-IA) at 202-228-0554 (fax) and/or email the letter to: Health_Reform@finance-dem.senate.gov.

→ **Share this email with advocates in your state and community.** The greater the number of letters your Senators receive over the recess, the more they will pay attention—so please recruit others to weigh in!

→ **Schedule visits with your Senators' local office staff to discuss *Project 2020* and share your letter in person.**

Sample Letter:

Dear Senators _____:

[Agency's Name/State Association, etc.] is writing to you today in support of a legislative proposal called *Project 2020: Building on the Promise of Home and Community-Based Services*, championed by Senator Maria Cantwell. We ask for your help in ensuring that this important legislation is included in broader health care reform legislation this year.

As you know, **[State]** has worked to provide essential home and community-based long-term care services and supports through the **[Name of State Unit on Aging]**, our local Area Agencies on Aging, and a range of community-based service providers. We believe that *Project 2020* would build on our existing long-term care system to make these critical services and supports more accessible to all residents—older adults *and* persons with disabilities.

This important legislation would provide the resources to implement consumer-centered and cost-effective long-term care strategies authorized in the 2006 reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. These long-term care services and support strategies have been tested on a national demonstration basis in **[State]** and around the country, and are now ready for full implementation.

The proposed legislation would take to scale efforts to implement statewide person-centered access to information, evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion activities which have been successfully tested **[Insert areas where projects have been tested in your State]**, and enhanced nursing home diversion services, which would produce savings to both our state and the federal government by reducing growing costs under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

[Note: For state-specific details, visit the [Project 2020 Campaign Page](http://www.n4a.org/advocacy/campaigns/?fa=project-2020) : <http://www.n4a.org/advocacy/campaigns/?fa=project-2020>]

It is anticipated, based on independent analysis through the Lewin Group, that **[State]** would be able to serve an additional **[## residents]** over five years through *Project 2020*. The new investment provided through *Project 2020* activities is also expected to produce more than **[\$# million]** in savings to our State budget over the same time period, while reducing federal Medicaid and Medicare costs by approximately \$2.8 billion.

We urge you to support inclusion of *Project 2020* in broader health care reform legislation. Your support will be critical as we seek to build on existing long-term care systems in order to meet the challenges of the aging population, and we look forward to working closely with you this year to make *Project 2020* a reality.

Sincerely,

cc: Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus and Ranking Member Charles Grassley

Additional Resources:

n4a's *Project 2020 Campaign Page* Find talking points and state-specific figures for the Sample Letter above at: <http://www.n4a.org/advocacy/campaigns/?fa=project-2020>.

If you have questions about this *Advocacy Alert*, please contact n4a's Public Policy and Legislative Affairs staff, Amy Gotwals and KJ Hertz, at 202.872.0888 or agotwals@n4a.org, khertz@n4a.org.

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