

**Laura Cameron, NYSAAAA**

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**From:** K.J. Hertz [khertz@n4a.org]

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 11, 2009 5:37 PM

**To:** laura@nysaaaa.org

**Subject:** Keep Up the Pressure on Congress; Reconnect with Legislators on Project 2020



**August 11, 2009**

**Keep Up the Pressure on Congress!**  
***Reconnect With Your Legislators During August Recess***  
***and Press for Inclusion of LTSS and Project 2020 in Health***  
***Reform***

*Encourage your Senators and Representatives to support long-term services and supports (LTSS) provisions including Project 2020 as part of health reform legislation.*

The House and Senate will be in recess through Labor Day. The August recess is a perfect opportunity to reconnect with your legislators and their staff to urge them to support *Project 2020* and do more to expand the availability of home and community-based services for seniors in the health insurance reform bills.

Thanks to those of you who have already contacted your legislators and customized and sent letters in support of *Project 2020* to Congress. We need to keep up the pressure on Congress to pass *Project 2020* during this critical recess period. Even if you have connected with your legislators before, it is critical that you reach out to them again over the month-long recess while they are back home holding "town hall" meetings on health reform and meeting with constituent groups. They must hear from you and the older adults who benefit from your agency's programs and services. Without your voices, *Project 2020* and other key LTSS provisions will not be included in health reform.

For a list of town halls and district events, visit:

<http://chn.org/pdf/2009/HealthTownHallsAug09.pdf>.

**Background:**

As detailed in previous n4a *Advocacy Alerts*, *Project 2020* was introduced as S. 1257 by

Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and H.R. 2852 by Representatives Bruce Braley (D-IA) and John Sarbanes (D-MD). Working with our partners at NASUA, n4a is recruiting Members of Congress to sign on as co-sponsors of S. 1257/H.R. 2852 and to push for inclusion of *Project 2020* provisions in the House and Senate health insurance reform packages currently under discussion.

Health insurance reform remains front-and-center this recess. The House Democrats completed committee mark-ups on their tri-committee health reform bill just before leaving for recess and the Senate Finance Committee continues to work to negotiate a bipartisan agreement on its health reform package.

n4a and NASUA are working closely with the *Project 2020* bill's congressional champions on amendment strategies for committee and floor consideration in September and we will keep you posted on these efforts. **In the meantime, it is crucial that every single AAA and Title VI Native American aging program also weigh in directly (and/or indirectly through your advisory boards, community leaders, etc.) with your state/district's congressional delegation.**

### **Action Steps to Take:**

1. **Call the local offices of your legislators and request a meeting to discuss *Project 2020* and health reform.** To find contact information for their state offices, visit their web sites, which you can find at: <http://www.senate.gov> and <http://www.house.gov>.
2. Introduce yourself to staff and identify what agency you represent; mention how critical the services included in *Project 2020* would be to older adults in your community; and then ask your legislators to consider co-sponsoring the *Project 2020* bill (S. 1257/H.R. 2852).
3. **If you haven't done so already, customize the sample *Project 2020* letter on your agency's letterhead and send it to your legislators' DC offices via fax or email.**
4. Ask others to do the same! Urge colleagues, advisory board members, volunteers and clients to make calls and send faxes/emails to your agency's House and Senate congressional delegation. The more calls, faxes and emails, the more likely *Project 2020* will be included in health reform.

### **Resources:**

#### **Not sure where to start? n4a's *Project 2020* Campaign Page**

<http://www.n4a.org/advocacy/campaigns/?fa=project-2020> has all you need to craft your correspondence, educate others about the bill and ultimately persuade your Senators and Representatives to get on board.

#### ***Letters:***

We have developed state-specific sample letters that you can use to form the basis of your letter to your Senators and Representatives. Simply cut and paste the text into a new document and personalize as you see fit.

But feel free to customize your correspondence, borrowing from other *Project 2020* resources, like...

- Talking Points for Advocates
- *Project 2020* Overview (Short and detailed)

**Documents to Share:**

If you already have a relationship with a Member's office, please follow up on your letter with a phone call. Engage the staff member by offering to share more details on the bill, including...

- S. 1257/H.R. 2852 Bill Summary
- S. 1257/H.R. 2852 Bill Section-by-Section
- If they want more information on how the bill saves money, direct them to the Lewin Group report.

**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](mailto:agotwals@n4a.org), [khertz@n4a.org](mailto:khertz@n4a.org).

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