

THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION

THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION: A NATIONAL ADVOCACY VOICE FOR ELDER JUSTICE IN AMERICA

JOHN B. BREAUx: HONORARY CHAIR

ROBERT B. BLANCATO: NATIONAL COORDINATOR

Elder Justice Coalition Year End Report 2008

Legislation

- **S. 1070 (The Elder Justice Act):** In 2008, the Senate version of the Elder Justice Act, authored by Sen. Lincoln(AR) and Sen. Hatch (UT), gained 14 new co-sponsors for a total of 33 co-sponsors, including President-elect Barack Obama. On September 10th, 2009, the Finance Committee marked up and passed the Elder Justice Act for the 3rd time in history. On September 19th, 2008 the bill was placed on the Senate legislative calendar for consideration by the full Senate, but was never brought to the floor due to the objections of Senators Tom Coburn (R-OK) and Jim DeMint (R-SC). As a result, the legislation must be introduced again in the 111th Congress which convened on January 3, 2009.
- **H.R. 1783 (The Elder Justice Act):** The House version of the Elder Justice Act, authored by Rep. Emanuel (IL) and Rep. King(NY), gained 36 new co-sponsors in 2008, for a total of 122 co-sponsors. On April 17th, 2008, the subcommittee of Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security of the House Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the Elder Justice Act. Author Rep. Rahm Emanuel and Elder Justice Coalition National Coordinator Bob Blancato testified on behalf of the bill. On May 14th, 2008 the full House Judiciary Committee passed the bill, but no action was taken by the three other committees (Education and Labor, Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means) that had jurisdiction over the bill.
- **S. 1577 (The Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act of 2007):** Introduced by Senator Kohl in 2007, S. 1577 gained two new co-sponsors in 2008 for a total of 16 co-sponsors, one of them being President-Elect Barack Obama. On September 10th, 2008, the bill was passed by the Senate Finance Committee and on September 22nd placed on the legislative calendar for consideration by the full Senate, but was never brought to the Senate floor.
- **H.R. 5352 (Elder Abuse Victims Act of 2008):** The newest Elder Justice legislation was introduced on February 12th, 2008 by Rep. Sestak (PA). On April 17th, the subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security of the House Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the bill during which Rep. Sestak and Bob Blancato both testified on behalf of the bill. On May 14th, 2008 the full House Judiciary Committee passed the bill and on September 23rd the full House of Representatives passed the Act by a vote of 387-28. Further action on the bill was halted in the Senate.

To view both Senator Hatch and Lincoln's Floor Speeches on the Elder Justice Act, follow the links below.

- Hatch Floor Speech - [http://www.c-spanarchives.org/flash/player-time.html?start=2008-05-20 10:26:32&stop=2008-05-20 10:42:50&net=2](http://www.c-spanarchives.org/flash/player-time.html?start=2008-05-20%2010:26:32&stop=2008-05-20%2010:42:50&net=2)

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- Lincoln Floor Speech - <http://www.c-spanarchives.org/flash/player-time.html?start=2008-05-20%2010:55:49&stop=2008-05-20%2011:07:13&net=2>

Media Interviews and Clips:

- Video Webcast of Bob Blancato and Rep. Rahm Emanuel's Testimony before House Judiciary Committee: http://judiciary.house.gov/hearings/hear_041708.html
- Bob Blancato's quote in AARP Bulletin on DTV Scams: http://bulletin.aarp.org/yourmoney/scamalert/articles/digital_don_ts.html
- The work of the Elder Justice Coalition was cited in several news articles during the course of 2008 and National Coordinator Bob Blancato did several national radio interviews and was interviewed by CNN in the Coalition office

Previous Co-Sponsors who are not Returning:

Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY) – Appointed
 Sen. Elizabeth Dole (R-NC) – Replaced by Sen. Kay Hagen (D)
 Sen. Barack Obama (D-IL) – Elected President
 Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE) – Elected Vice President
 Sen. Ken Salazar (D-CO) – Appointed
 Rep. Nancy Boyda (R-KS) – Replaced by Rep. Lynn Jenkins (R)
 Rep. Darlene Hooley (D-OR) – Retired, replaced by Rep. Kurt Shrader (D)
 Rep. John Kuhl (R-NY) – Replaced by Rep. Eric Massa (D)
 Rep. Nick Lampson (D-TX) – Replaced by Rep. Pete Olsen (R)
 Rep. Tim Mahoney (D-FL) – Replaced by Rep. Tim Rooney (R)
 Rep. Michael McNulty (D-NY) – Retired, replaced by Rep. Paul Tonko (D)
 Rep. Thomas Reynolds (R-NY) – Retired, replaced by Rep. Christopher Lee (R)
 Rep. Hilda Solis (D-CA) – Appointed
 Rep. James Walsh (R-NY) – Replaced by Rep. Dan Maffei (D)
 Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-IL) – White House Chief of Staff

New Coalition Members:

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|----------------------|----------------------|
| Adria Navarro | Gail MacInnes |
| Al Morken | Gary Price |
| Ashley Carson | Jeanne Pici |
| Older Women's League | Jenefer Duane |
| Bob Brown | Karen Nicolson |
| Bob Wiggins | Kathryn Coreil |
| Chad Orr | Lutricia McDonald |
| Doris Ball | Marsha White |
| Elana Margolis | Mary Crowley-Schmidt |
| Erin Rock | Regina Curran |



1/7/2009

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NATIONAL
COORDINAT
OR**

Robert Vines
Wider Opportunities for
Women

Sue Peschin
N.C. Association of County Directors of
Social Services (NCACDSS)

571 Total Coalition members as of 12/31/2008

Looking Ahead

In December of 2008, the EJC Coordinating Committee met with key Senate and House staffers on the Elder Justice Act and the new Congress. Our advocacy focus is to gain an early introduction of the bill, secure as many co sponsors as possible, and let the legislation move through various Committees in the House and Senate to allow it to come to a vote early in the new session. Advocacy efforts will also be directed at the incoming Obama-Biden Administration to gain their support of the legislation. This will include raising the Elder Justice Act in confirmation hearings for relevant officials in the new Administration and holding early meetings. The Bush Administration had opposed the Elder Justice Act.

In addition, the Coalition will be working to increase and broaden its membership base to be an even more effective voice on behalf of elder justice. Our education, outreach, media and public awareness work will continue as well going forward in 2009.

The Leadership Council on Aging Organizations, made up of the top 55 national aging organizations, submitted a transition guide to the Obama Transition Team which mentioned both the Elder Justice Act and specific problems in the area of elder justice for the incoming administration to focus on. A white paper was also published by Elder Justice Coalition member MT Connolly on the important issues concerning elder abuse and reporting and the need for increased funding and legislation. The Elder Justice Coalition, along with many other national organizations, signed on to this important letter which was sent to the Obama Transition Team.

For more information and to remain current with EJC activities go to our website www.elderjustice.org or contact Katy Bosse at kbosse@matzblancato.com