



URGENT APPROPRIATIONS ALERT **Lifespan Respite Care Act (P.L. 109-442)**

The Lifespan Respite Care Act authorizes competitive grants to Aging and Disability Resource Centers in collaboration with a public or private non-profit state respite coalition or organization to make quality respite available and accessible to family caregivers regardless of age or disability. The law allows grantees to identify, coordinate and build on federal, state and local respite resources and funding streams, and would help support, expand and streamline planned and emergency respite, provider recruitment and training, and caregiver training.

Status: The House bill originally introduced by Rep. Mike Ferguson (R-NJ) and Rep. Langevin (D-RI), passed the House on December 6, 2006 and the Senate on December 8, 2006. It was signed into law on December 21, 2006. The original Senate companion bill, was introduced by Senators John Warner (R-VA) and Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY). The new law cannot be implemented unless Congress appropriates the funding for FY08.

ACTION: Contact your US Representative and US Senators and urge them to fund the Lifespan Respite Care Act at \$40 million in the FY08 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill. To identify your federal legislators and their contact information, visit www.congress.org and enter your zip code. You can send an email or fax containing the message below. The most effective way is to call them directly. Call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for the Member's office. Then ask for staff who handle appropriations or health issues.

→ MESSAGE:

- **Fully fund the Lifespan Respite Care Act at \$40 million in the FY 08 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill.** The Act is based on model State Lifespan Respite Systems in Oregon, Nebraska, Wisconsin and Oklahoma, which provide easy access to an array of affordable, quality respite services; ensure flexibility to meet diverse needs; and assist with locating, training, and paying respite providers.
- Respite, the most frequently requested family support service, has been shown to provide family caregivers with the relief necessary to maintain their own health, bolster family stability, keep marriages intact, and avoid or delay more costly nursing home or foster care placements.
- In these times of serious budget constraints, the economic value that accrues from respite is exceptional. Delaying nursing home or institutional placement of just one individual with a chronic condition for several months can save Medicaid, private insurance, or the family thousands of dollars.
- The nation's estimated 50 million family caregivers provide 80% of long-term care. The value of uncompensated family caregiving services to the U.S. economy is estimated at \$306 billion a year, more than twice what is spent nationwide on nursing homes and paid home care combined and comparable to Medicare spending in 2004.
- American businesses lose \$17.1 to \$33.6 billion annually in lost productivity costs related to caregiving responsibilities.

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Summary of Lifespan Respite Care Act (PL 109-442)

Use of Funds: The bill would authorize funds requiring state grantees to:

- ★ develop or enhance lifespan respite programs at the state and local levels;
- ★ provide planned and emergency respite for family caregivers of children and adults;
- ★ train and recruit respite workers and volunteers;
- ★ provide information to caregivers about available respite and support services; and
- ★ assist caregivers in gaining access to such services.

Grantees would have the option of using funds for training programs for family caregivers in making informed decisions about respite services; for other services essential to the provision of respite; and for training and education for new caregivers.

What is a Lifespan Respite Program?

Lifespan respite programs provide coordinated systems of accessible, community-based respite care services for family caregivers of children and adults with special needs.

Who Can Access Lifespan Respite Programs?

Caregivers who are family members, foster parents, or other adults providing unpaid (clarified n report language) care for an adult or child with a special need may access these programs. Adult with special need is defined broadly as a person 18 years of age or older who requires care or supervision to meet the person's basic needs, to prevent physical self-injury or injury to others, or to avoid placement in an institutional facility. A child with a special need is a person less than 18 years of age who requires care or supervision beyond that required of children generally to meet the child's basic needs or prevent physical self-injury or injury to others.

Lead Agency Eligibility

Funds would be provided on a competitive grant basis to Aging and Disability Resource Centers in collaboration with public or private nonprofit statewide respite coalitions or organizations (memorandum of agreement required in application). Priority would be given to applicants who show the greatest likelihood of implementing or enhancing lifespan respite care statewide.

Application Submission

The Governor submits application on behalf of the State Agency that administers the Older American's Act, the State's Medicaid program, or another agency designated by the Governor.

Federal Administration

Secretary of Health and Human Services is required to work in cooperation with the National Family Caregiver Support Program Officer of the Administration on Aging and other respite care programs within the Department to ensure coordination of respite for family caregivers.

Funding Authorization: \$30 million for FY07, \$40 million for FY08, \$53.3 million for FY09, \$71.1 million for FY2010 and \$94.8 for FY2011.

National Resource Center: Establishes National Resource Center on Lifespan Respite Care.

GAO Report: Report on Lifespan Respite Programs required by 2011.

Prepared by National Respite Coalition. For more information, please contact Jill Kagan at jbkagan@verizon.net or by phone at 703-256-9578 or visit www.archrespite.org/nrc.htm. Updated January 2007.