



BRUCE BRALEY
SERVING IOWA'S 1ST
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



Congressman Bruce Braley: Working to Improve Mental Health Services

Helped pass into law H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007

- This legislation provides critical, life-saving mental health care to millions of Americans, and reduces the burdens on our already overtaxed hospital system by treating mental illness and addiction disorders sooner.
- The bill requires insurance companies to cover mental health to the same extent that they cover physical health.
- Rep. Braley was a cosponsor the bill and helped shepherd it through the House, until it became law in 2008.

Rep. Braley passed legislation into law to study ways to improve mental health services for the spouses and children of Guard and Reserve

- Congressman Braley authored and passed an amendment to H.R. 1585, the National Defense Authorization Act, requiring the Department of Defense to conduct a study on implementing a peer-to-peer National Guard and Reserve spouses' counseling program, and a program to provide mental health and other support services for the children of Guard and Reserve members.

Rep. Braley authored and introduced HR 2201, the Medicare Equity and Accessibility Act of 2007

- This legislation would increase Medicare Part B reimbursement rates for health care professionals in Iowa and other rural states in order to help Iowa retain doctors and improve patient access to quality healthcare. This legislation would institute a permanent floor on the Geographic Practice Cost Indexes under Medicare Part B, directly increasing the Medicare Part B reimbursement to Iowa health care providers.

Working to designate a National Brain Injury Awareness Month

- Rep. Braley is a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 40, which expresses the need for enhanced public awareness of traumatic brain injury and support for the designation of a National Brain Injury Awareness Month.

Fighting the pending Medicare cut to reimbursements, working to replace the SGR, and expanding and improving S-CHIP

- Rep. Braley has repeatedly spoken on record, sent letters, and urged his colleagues in the House and Senate to stop the pending cuts to Medicare reimbursements. However, on January 1, 2010, a 21% cut to Medicare Part B reimbursements will go into effect unless Congress acts again this year.
- Rep. Braley was glad to previously avoid a cut to Medicare reimbursements, by supporting legislation that eliminated a proposed 10% cut in 2009, and instead enacted a 1.1% increase to Medicare reimbursements under Part B for all of 2009.
- Rep. Braley also supported HR 3162, the *Children's Health and Medicare Protection (CHAMP) Act of 2007*, which passed the House on August 1, 2007 by a vote of 225-204. The CHAMP Act replaces the SGR as the mechanism for setting Medicare's physician payment rates with a new system that creates six different categories of physician services.

In the 110th Congress, introduced H.R. 1541, the Coming Together for Guard and Reserve Families Act

- This legislation, authored and introduced by Congressman Braley, expands mental health services and support for the families of National Guard and Reserve troops throughout the cycle of deployment.

In the 110th Congress, Rep. Braley was an original co-sponsor of H.R. 327, the Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act, which passed into law with Rep. Braley's support

- This legislation, which passed the House *unanimously* on March 21, 2007, requires the Veterans Administration (VA) to develop and implement a comprehensive veterans suicide prevention program, to provide 24-hour mental health care services to veterans, and to ensure that a suicide prevention counselor be available at every VA facility.

In the 110th Congress, co-sponsor of H.R. 2199, the Traumatic Brain Injury Health Enhancement and Long-Term Support Act of 2007

- This legislation requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to screen veterans for TBI, calls for a comprehensive program of long-term care for post-acute TBI rehabilitation, creates a TBI veteran health registry; and expands VA resources to provide rural communities with mobile vet centers for mental health services and benefits outreach. This bill passed the House by a vote of 421-0 on May 23, 2007.