

## **STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION**

### **STATE: Power of Attorney Reform** – S4996-B (Volker) / A6421-B (Weinstein)

Unfortunately, the **Senate bill did not come to a vote** before session was adjourned in June. However, **there is still hope** that the bill will pass this year. Legislators may be returning to Albany before the end of the year. Even if they don't vote on it this year, **we need to start now** to make sure it is a legislative priority in January 2009. Power of Attorney abuse is increasing. Victims of financial exploitation should not have to wait another two years for POA reform in New York State.

### **Power of Attorney Reform – Please contact your NYS Senator today**

POA reform was identified as a priority during the 2004 NYS Elder Abuse Summit, has been a focus of the NYS Coalition on Elder Abuse, and is something that many of you have been supporting for ten years or more.

**Many of you have been asking**, “Why didn't the bill pass and what can I do now to help?” Here are the answers to those questions:

**Assembly bill 6421-B** – passed in the Assembly on June 11

**Senate bill 4996-B** – **has not been voted on yet** in the Senate – *no problems identified so far, therefore we don't know why it was not voted on in the Senate*

**What you can do** – Please **call, fax or email** your Senator. For contact info: [www.senate.state.ny.us](http://www.senate.state.ny.us), click on *Senators*. For the bill, click on *Bills & Laws*. Please also contact Senator Skelos (the new Senate Majority Leader), Senator Volker (the bill sponsor), and Senator DeFrancisco (Judiciary Committee Chair). Leave a voice mail message if necessary. Share your concerns about the **need for POA reform**.

As you all know, financial exploitation is the **fastest growing form of elder abuse**. It is an often hidden tragedy that affects many elderly victims with all its **devastating emotional, physical, social and economic consequences**. Financial exploitation not only affects the financial security and physical and emotional well-being of an elderly victim, it **also takes a toll on public finances**. The impact is far reaching.

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### **FEDERAL: Elder Justice Act** – S.1070 (Hatch) / H.R.1783 (Emanuel)

For information about the bills: <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Passage of the **federal Elder Justice Act (EJA)** is another priority for the NYS Coalition on Elder Abuse and many of you are also members of the **Elder Justice Coalition (EJC)**, a national organization formed five years ago to provide a way for victims of elder abuse to adequately “have their voices heard and issues addressed.” For information about the EJC: <http://www.elderjusticecoalition.com/about.htm>.

**What you can do to help pass the Elder Justice Act** – Contact U.S. Senator Charles Schumer and ask for **immediate Senate Finance Committee action on the bill (S.1070), so the Elder Justice Act can finally pass this year.** Senator Schumer is a member of the Finance Committee and a co-sponsor of the EJA. Timing on this is very important. **Please contact Senator Schumer NOW** and tell him why passage of this landmark legislation is so important to older adults in your community:  
<http://schumer.senate.gov/SchumerWebsite/contact/contact.html>.

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You may think that one person can't make a difference, but **you are one of many – and many can make a difference!** Coalition *News Bulletins* reach over 1,000 people throughout the state and many more when they are forwarded on to colleagues – so **please keep forwarding the bulletins.**

Each of **you can help** educate legislators by **explaining why these reforms are necessary**, even if you do so as a private citizen rather than in your professional capacity. If you previously contacted your NYS Senator regarding POA abuse and its impact on elderly victims or U.S. Senator Schumer regarding the EJA, **please do so again NOW.** **There is still time to make a difference.**

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**CALLING ALL COALITIONS, TASK FORCES & COLLABORATIVE GROUPS**  
**that address issues related to elder abuse or domestic violence**

From the beginning, a **priority of the statewide Coalition** has been to encourage development and growth of local/regional, multidisciplinary collaborative efforts throughout the state. **In the past**, we have highlighted the activities of these local groups and **will continue** to do so. Sharing information will **help inspire others** to join forces in combating elder mistreatment in their own communities.

**Over the years**, we have **informally gathered information** about existing collaborative groups. The Coalition Advisory Board has always been interested in **compiling a more formal list**. There are a number of new groups forming around the state, so this is a good year to work on creating such a list. **But we need everyone's help to make it a comprehensive, accurate list and keep it updated.**

Whether you have an **existing group**, one **in transition**, or one in the **planning stages** – **Please send information** to Denise (contact info at the end). **Include as much information as possible** – name of group, geographic area covered, when formed, and some basic information – categories of agencies involved, main focus of the group, and a contact person for future reference. You may **also include other interesting information** – special projects, accomplishments, media coverage, events, WEAAD activities, etc. so we can spotlight them in future Coalition *News Bulletins*.

We are **also** interested in knowing **if agencies in some counties and/or Native American communities regularly work together or have formed natural alliances**, even if they don't have formal elder abuse or domestic violence collaborations. This may be true in some of the more rural areas or smaller counties.

**PLEASE READ – General Privacy Notice:**

We ***do not*** publish or widely distribute names and contact information of people on the Coalition email list; and that ***policy will continue***. However, we ***may*** on occasion **respond to individual requests** for information from other professionals throughout the state. Also, as we move forward with the statewide elder abuse prevalence and incidence study, **requests for sharing of contact information will increase**. If you have provided any contact information that you ***do not want given out***, please let Denise know so it can be noted and your information not be released to anyone. Thank you.

**TRAINING, CONFERENCES, INITIATIVES, ETC.**

**Initiative: NYC Elder Abuse Center Planning Project**

**1<sup>st</sup> Step – Gathering Ideas:** Send in your ideas about all that an Elder Abuse Center for NYC might be. Consider all possible aspects and features of such a Center.

**Link to Outreach Letter and Response Form:**

<http://www.cornellaging.org/elderabuse/pdf/OutreachLetterSurvey.pdf>

**Note:** Letter and form will be included as an attachment in the 2<sup>nd</sup> bulletin email, which will follow this one. You will be able to fill in the attached form electronically and return it to Cornell via email.

**Deadline:** Please submit responses by **July 15, 2008 for inclusion in the concept mapping** process.

**Please note:** Responses will still be accepted and appreciated **after the July 15<sup>th</sup> deadline**, but won't be included in the concept mapping process; those received in time will be included in that process.

The focus is on receiving input from stakeholders in the NYC area; however, they also **welcome suggestions about models and practices from other areas**.

**For more information, please contact:** Beth Rosenthal, [ber2012@med.cornell.edu](mailto:ber2012@med.cornell.edu), (212) 746-4194.

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**Date: November 12 & 13, 2008 (Call for Proposals – deadline extended to July 31, 2008)**

**Event:** Community Empowerment Conference – Statewide Symposium 2008

**Theme:** *Empowering Communities for Successful Aging: Housing, Neighborhood Supports and Services* – a conference that will provide communities with the tools to become elder friendly and more livable for all ages

**Sponsoring Organizations:**

AARP; NY Assoc. of Homes & Services for the Aging; NYS Office for the Aging

**Location:** Saratoga Hilton, Saratoga, NY

**Program Highlights:** Discussing the challenges of a rapidly growing aging population and learning about strategies and best practices for planning and implementing aging friendly communities that provide a positive quality of life for all residents.

**Call for Proposals Information:** deadline has been **extended to July 31, 2008**

*Proposals for Presentations should focus on:*

- Innovative or best practices the address one or more components of an elder-friendly community building process (organizing, assessing community needs, developing a plan, implementation); or
- An area of particular interest within the broader planning and implementation process (housing, supportive services, civic engagement, transportation, education/life-long learning, public safety, community infrastructure and design, zoning and land use planning)

**For more information contact:** John Cochran, [john.cochran@ofa.state.ny.us](mailto:john.cochran@ofa.state.ny.us), (518) 474-7012.

***Please note:*** *Call for Presentations Submission Form and a document providing additional information about the conference will be included as attachments in the 2<sup>nd</sup> bulletin email.*

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Coalition News Bulletins are sent to interested parties throughout the state. **Please feel free to share them with others or contact us if you know of someone who should be added to the list.** For questions or comments about the Coalition or the Bulletins, or if you have topic suggestions for future publications, please contact:

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