



**Legislative Alert: Send a letter to your US Representatives asking them to co-sponsor H.R. 1361 and S. 538, the “Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act.”**

**Date: March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

***Action Requested: NASP needs you to ask your US Representative to co-sponsor H.R. 1361 and S. 538, the “Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act.” This needs the support of every school psychologist as it specifically addresses building the capacity of schools for school psychological services.***

NASP needs you to contact your elected officials and ask for their support as a co-sponsor of the Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act. H.R. 1361 was introduced in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009 by Representatives Towns (NY-10), L. Sanchez (CA-39), and Polis (CO-2) and S. 538 was introduced by Senators Lincoln (AR) and Cochran (MS). This bill gained considerable support in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress and we anticipate that with your continued support, it will continue to gain momentum. It is critical if this bill is to become part of the reauthorization of ESEA/NCLB that it receives the bipartisan support of as many co-sponsors as possible.

This legislation would create a federal grant program to help build the capacity of low-income school districts to recruit, employ, and retain school psychologists, social workers, and counselors. It acknowledges the importance of removing the barriers to learning that are created when students struggle with a personal life crisis, mental health issue, or social, behavioral, or learning problem. It also emphasizes the important role that school psychologists, counselors, and social workers play in resolving these issues so students can focus on learning. Grant funds are available to university-school district training partnerships in low-income and low-achieving schools. This funding can be used to hire university faculty; provide tuition assistance for graduate students; support supervision and placement of graduate students in school settings; reduce the student to school psychologist, counselor, and social worker ratios; and build student support programs in school districts. In order to support the long-term capacity of urban and rural low-income schools to retain school psychologists, social workers, and counselors, student loan forgiveness will be awarded to those professionals who remain in their participating school for a minimum of five years. This program will support schools in developing and implementing long-term comprehensive mental health programs to meet the needs of all students and assist them in succeeding in school and in life.

Here's what we need you to do.....

1. **Send a letter to your elected officials through the NASP Advocacy Action Center.** Click on the following link and you will be guided through a simple **1-minute process** for sending an e-mail to your elected official. You only need your name and address to submit this correspondence. Click on the address here or type it in if your link fails.  
<http://capwiz.com/naspweb/issues/alert/?alertid=11665471&type=CO> Go to the ACTION ALERT box and click on Support Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act **OR**
2. **If you know the name of your US Representative or Senator, you can call them by phone: Call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.** Once you are connected with your elected official, you will likely get a voicemail system where you should say, "Hi, my name is (your name) from (your city and state). As your constituent, I am calling to ask you to sign on as a co-sponsor of the "Increased Student Achievement through Increased Student Support Act." I believe that in order to achieve the goals of NCLB, it is critical to respond to children's social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs by making sure that professionals that are trained to support students, teachers, and school administrators in removing these barriers to learning are available and accessible in every school. If you need to reach me for any reason, you can contact me at (your phone number) or (your e-mail address). Thank you for your time and attention to this matter."
3. **Forward this e-mail to any colleagues, friends, or family members that you think might be interested in participating in this effort.** They do not have to be NASP members to participate.

**Thank you for your advocacy efforts and being part of the 1-minute solution!** If you have any questions or comments about this alert, please feel free to contact NASP Public Policy Director, Stacy Skalski, at [sskalski@naspweb.org](mailto:sskalski@naspweb.org) or 301-657-0270, or NASP Public Policy Fellow, Heather Doescher at [hdoescher@naspweb.org](mailto:hdoescher@naspweb.org) or 301-347-1652.

***"I never worry about action, but only inaction."  
--Winston Churchill***