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# THE ELDER JUSTICE COALITION

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

**JOHN B. BREAUX: HONORARY CHAIR**

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To the Coalition:

Last night an amendment authored by Senator Herb Kohl, related to criminal background checks, was adopted by an 89-7 vote as part of the Senate Budget resolution, which itself passed. This was the first vote on an elder justice related matter in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. The amendment would establish a deficit neutral fund for a 3 year extension of the pilot program for national and state criminal background checks on direct patient access employees of long term care facilities or providers.

The amendment was co-sponsored by Senators:

Domenici (NM)  
Lincoln (AR)  
Whitehouse (RI)  
Bingaman (NM)  
Clinton (NY)  
Coleman (MN)  
Stabenow (MI)  
Levin (MI)  
Casey (PA)

The Elder Justice Coalition was in regular consultation with Senator Kohl's staff during the development and consideration of this amendment. We are hopeful that this will prove to be a helpful development in the continued discussions leading to action by the Senate Finance Committee on elder justice legislation.

Meanwhile support continues to grow for S. 1070 and H.R. 1783, the respective Elder Justice Acts. There are currently 24 Senate co-sponsors and 102 in the House. The most recent are Senator Wyden (OR) and Senator Snowe (ME) in the Senate, and Rep. Oberstar (MN), Rep. Dale Kildee (MI), Rep. Napolitano (CA), and Rep. Lewis (GA) in the House.

Congress will be in its Easter District Work later today through the end of March. We ask EJC Coalition members to contact their House Member and Senators about the Elder Justice Act during this time. For Senators who have co-sponsored, first thank them and then ask them to contact Chairman Max Baucus of the Senate Finance Committee to urge he mark up and pass the bill in April. If they have not yet co-sponsored, please urge them to do so. On the House side, if your Member is a cosponsor, communicate your thanks and ask he/she to contact their respective leaderships to urge the Elder Justice Act be made a priority for passage this year. If your House member is not yet a cosponsor, again urge them to do so. For a complete list of co-sponsors please go to [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov) and search for the Elder Justice Act. Click on H.R. 1783 or S. 1070 and then "Bill Summary and Status."

The more co-sponsors that the Elder Justice Act can get in the House and Senate, the better its prospect for passage. This is direct advocacy you can do the most effectively. Thanks to all!

Bob Blancato  
National Coordinator