#NAMICOn16

Cutting through Election Noise to #Act4MentalHealth

Bob Spada, NAMI Board, Ohio State Senator (retired)
Angela Kimball, NAMI National Director, Advocacy & Public Policy
Jessica Hart, NAMI Manager, Advocacy Communications
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Moderator: Sita Diehl, NAMI Director, Policy & State Advocacy

NAMI National Convention
Denver. July 6-9, 2016
Overview

• 2016 Election and You
• *Why* your advocacy matters: A legislator’s view
  • Why connect with candidates?
• *What* we’re voting on, how it helps you
• *How* to Act4MentalHealth
• ACT!
• Q&A
Why your advocacy matters: A legislator’s view
Why connect with candidates?

Think about your experience of trying to get mental health services and supports for yourself or others.

• Why is connecting with candidates important in your local community?
• How could an informed engaged elected official make a difference?
How Congress affects mental health

• Federal budget
  • Research
  • Housing vouchers and supports
  • Medicaid and Medicare
  • State mental health block grants

• Mental health reform bills (S. 2680 and H.R. 2646)
  • Insurance parity
  • Suicide prevention
  • Crisis services
  • Integration of health and mental health care
  • Workforce development

• Criminal justice-related mental health bills
  • Treatment courts
  • Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT)
Congress listens to NAMI

• Unanimous 53-0 vote for mental health reform in House Energy & Commerce Committee

• Senate request for NAMI’s help on mental health reform

• Senator drafts bill for caregiver support

• Meetings with NAMI members and leaders
NAMI’s Power

• NAMI is in an enviable position...
  • Strong presence on Capitol Hill
  • Strong ties between NAMI’s grassroots and members of Congress
  • Unanimous 53-0 vote for mental health reform in House Energy & Commerce Committee

• NAMI’s power is in working together

• Join us—sign up for advocacy alerts at nami.org/advocacy
#ACT4MENTALHEALTH

- **Campaign goal:**
  - If elected, candidates will act on NAMI’s priorities

- **NAMI member action steps:**
  - Promote NAMI’s 5 priorities
  - Question candidates
  - Vote!
5 Asks:

If elected, what will candidates do to:

1. Increase availability of quality mental health care
2. Promote early identification and intervention
3. Reduce criminalization of mental illness
4. Enforce mental health insurance parity
5. Support mental health caregivers
Connect with Candidates

Federal
State
Local

Opportunities:
• Town halls & campaign events
• On social media
• In response to media coverage
• Cohost a candidate forum (LWV, NAACP, AARP, etc.)
Lapel stickers

T-shirts, Magnets, Posters

Priority sheets
• Know the priorities
• Question candidates on social
• Pledge to vote
• Get #Act4MentalHealth gear
• Share how YOU #Act4MentalHealth
  • Selfies welcome!
You can do it too!
• Write a **postcard** to a candidate
  • President
  • Congress
  • State legislator

• Note to self:

• Complete your Act.Advocate.Achieve form
Thank you!

Questions?

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