



AdvocacyALERT

A MEMBER BENEFIT

House to Consider Labor-HHS Funding Bill This Week Still Time for Advocacy to Save Our SHIPs!

July 5, 2016

Members of Congress return to DC this week and a key item on the House agenda is Appropriations Committee consideration of the Labor-HHS funding bill. As n4a's [June 28 Advocacy Alert](#) detailed, there are advocacy efforts underway in the House to reject the Senate proposal to zero out funding for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP).

House appropriators, who are scheduled to consider SHIP funding on Thursday, still need to hear from advocates about the dire consequences of eliminating a program that helps millions of Medicare beneficiaries compare coverage options, appeal denials, apply for financial assistance and navigate increasingly complex Medicare benefits.

In the lead-up to House consideration of the Labor-HHS funding bill, there are several critical advocacy actions you can take to ensure House Appropriators reject the Senate's recommendation to eliminate SHIPs.

Please reach out to your Representatives not just to educate them on the value of the SHIP program and the need for continued funding, but also to ask them to sign on by **tomorrow, July 6, to a [Dear Colleague letter](#) supporting SHIPs!**

Action Steps

- **There is still time! Reach out to your Members of Congress and let them know your agency opposes the Senate's proposal to cut SHIPs.** You can still use [the resources in this Alert](#) to send a customized email or send them an email directly, but make sure you communicate the value of the SHIP program in your community!
- **Ask your Representative to sign onto the House [Dear Colleague letter](#) supporting SHIPs by tomorrow at the latest.** Members of Congress who wish to sign on can contact Cathy Hurwit (202.225.2111) or Megan Sussman (202.225.7163).
- **Continue engaging your community on this issue!** We must keep up the drumbeat! The [n4a & Medicare Rights Center alert](#) is easy to understand and makes taking action very simple. Please **both continue share [the link](#)** with your providers,

advisory boards, partners, SHIP volunteers and consumers to take action **and encourage your Representatives to sign the [Dear Colleague letter](#)** in the House!

Note, as you reach out it's also important to PERSONALIZE the emails you send and share anecdotes about the type of direct assistance SHIPs provide, data on how many volunteer hours are provided in your area and other stories or data sets that will educate Congress about the value of the SHIPs.

For national data and background information on SHIP:
<http://www.acl.gov/Programs/CIP/OHIC/SHIP.aspx>

Thank you for your advocacy on this important issue!

--

If you have questions or concerns about this *Advocacy Alert* or n4a's policy positions, please contact Autumn Campbell at acampbell@n4a.org and Amy Gotwals at agotwals@n4a.org.