



AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

**American Counseling Association Public Policy and Legislative Agenda
for the Second Session of the 111th Congress, 2010**
(approved by ACA Governing Council, March, 2010)

MISSION: Increase support for professional counselors and their clients in all appropriate Federal and State laws, regulations, and legislation.

Mental Health, Substance Abuse Treatment and Related Services

- A. Increase recognition of Professional Counselors as qualified providers, and beneficiary access to quality behavioral health services, within health care and social services bills and programs, including:
 1. Medicare
 2. TRICARE
 3. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and other programs administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 4. Federal Employee Health Benefits program
 5. Substance abuse treatment programs
 6. Department of Veterans' Affairs
- B. Address impact of managed care on providers and consumers
- C. Promote confidentiality of client information
- D. Promote parity of insurance coverage for behavioral health (including substance abuse) treatment
- E. Promote Medicaid coverage of mental illness and services needed by persons with disabilities

Education, Rehabilitation and Workforce Development

- A. Increase access to school counseling services within reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)
- B. Promote adequate appropriations for the Elementary & Secondary School Counseling Program and other counseling-related programs
- C. Monitor and address counseling issues in reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- D. Address counseling issues within reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act
- E. Address counseling issues within reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- F. Monitor and address counseling issues in federal higher education programs
- G. Promote and raise awareness of school-based mental health professionals (i.e., school counselors)
- H. Promote loan forgiveness for counselors
- I. Support anti-bullying legislation

Social Advocacy and Human Rights Issues

- A. Support universal access to health care services and health insurance coverage
- B. Support recognition of civil unions that are structured, committed relationships, regardless of sex, gender, or sexuality
- C. Support programs and services that promote public health, wellness, prevention, and consumer protection

State Counselor Legislation

- A. Provide assistance regarding licensure laws and regulations
- B. Provide assistance regarding professional school counseling Issues
- C. Provide assistance for Freedom of Choice/third party reimbursement of counselors legislation
- D. Support Medicaid advocacy for counselors
- E. Support portability of counselor licensure and credentials
- F. Monitor discrimination between national teacher and school counselor certification
- G. Support efforts to define when counselors are obligated to break confidentiality in order to protect clients or identified others from serious and foreseeable harm