

Technical Assistance Collaborative

Breaking News!

Congress Enacts Legislation to Reform HUD's Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities Program

December 21, 2010

The Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) is pleased to announce that the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2010 was enacted by Congress today and will soon be signed into law by President Obama.

This groundbreaking legislation will reinvigorate and modernize a moribund U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program - the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program. Section 811 provides critically important affordable housing linked with community-based supportive services for the most vulnerable people with disabilities. By leveraging other sources of capital funding, such as federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, the reformed Section 811 program will now develop thousands more units of supportive housing every year and - for the first time - create integrated supportive housing units within affordable housing properties.

TAC and the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force led an intensive three-year advocacy effort that culminated today in the House of Representatives. On Friday, December 17th, the U.S. Senate passed this legislation - S 1481 - by unanimous consent. The House passed a similar bill in 2009 and voted today to adopt the bill passed by the Senate before final adjournment of the 111th Congress.

"This legislation is a significant accomplishment which will improve the lives of thousands more people with the most significant and long-term disabilities" said Ann O'Hara, Associate Director of TAC. "We are extremely proud to have been a part of this important effort. TAC is also enormously grateful for the work of our partners in the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force, particularly Andrew Sperling from the National Alliance on Mental Illness."

TAC also applauds the bipartisan leadership that made this legislation possible and extends its thanks to the Members of Congress who, along with their staff, helped make this important legislation a reality including:

- Congressman Christopher Murphy (D-CT) and Congresswoman Judy Biggert (R-IL) who were the lead co-sponsors in the House;
- Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) and Congressman Spencer Bachus (R-AL), Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Financial Services Committee;
- Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and Senator Mike Johanns (R-NE) who were the lead co-sponsors in the Senate; and
- Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT) and Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL), Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Banking Committee.

Section 811 Reforms

The Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act makes long overdue improvements to the Section 811 program by:

- Modernizing and simplifying the capital advance program for non-profit sponsors;
- Integrating supportive housing for people with disabilities into larger multi-family affordable rental housing developments;
- Protecting an existing tenant-based program targeted to people with disabilities; and
- Creating an innovative subsidy approach that will allow states and localities leverage additional capital funds for the creation of new units of supportive housing.

This important legislation is named in honor of the late Frank Melville, the first Board Chair of the Melville Charitable Trust. Frank Melville and the entire Melville Charitable Trust family have been national leaders in promoting supportive housing as a highly successful and cost-effective best practice that can prevent and end unnecessary institutionalization and homelessness among people with the most significant and long-term disabilities.

About Technical Assistance Collaborative

TAC is a national non-profit organization that advances proven solutions to the housing and community support needs of vulnerable low-income people with significant and long-term disabilities. TAC strives to achieve sustainable public sector systems change through evidenced-based and promising approaches in mental health, substance abuse, human services, and affordable and permanent supportive housing. More information on the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act can be found at www.tacinc.org.