

## AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT BILL

### Potential Impact on Mental Health Services

This summary is derived from the Summary prepared by the Committee on Appropriations released Thursday, January 15, 2009. While the bill does not address mental health services directly, it does address services and supports for persons in need and persons with disabilities. In addition to reinvestment initiatives, the bill also extends the moratorium on Medicaid and Medicare regulations through October 1, 2009.

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The American Recovery and Reinvestment Bill of 2009 targets investments to key areas that will create and preserve good jobs at the same time as it is strengthening the ability of this economy to become more efficient and produce more opportunities for employment. Some of the Reinvestment efforts within the bill that may affect the lives of persons living with mental illness are:

\$16 billion to repair public housing and make key energy efficiency retrofits, including: \$2.5 billion to upgrade HUD sponsored low-income housing; \$6 billion to weatherize modest-income homes; and \$6.2 billion to help low-income families reduce their energy costs by weatherizing their homes.

\$400 million to replace the 30 year old Social Security Administration's National Computer Center to meet growing needs for processing retirement and disability claims; \$3.75 billion for new construction of hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers; and \$455 million in renovations to provide medical care to service members and their families.

Update and computerize our healthcare system to cut red tape, prevent medical mistakes, and help reduce healthcare costs to include: \$20 billion for health information technology; \$4.1 billion to provide for preventative care and to evaluate the most effective healthcare treatments; \$3 billion to fight preventable chronic diseases and infectious diseases; \$1.5 billion for Community Health Centers including \$500 million to increase the number of uninsured Americans who receive quality healthcare and \$1 billion to renovate clinics; and \$600 million to address shortages and prepare our country for universal healthcare by training primary healthcare providers including doctors, dentists, and nurses.

\$43 billion for increased unemployment benefits and job training with: \$500 million for construction and rehabilitation of facilities to help persons with disabilities prepare for gainful employment; \$27 billion to continue extended unemployment benefits through 12/31/09; \$39 billion to support those who lose their jobs by helping to pay the cost of healthcare under COBRA and providing short-term options to be covered by Medicaid; and, \$8.6 billion to provide 100% Federal funding through 2010 for optional State Medicaid coverage of individuals (and their dependents) who are involuntarily unemployed or who are receiving food stamps

\$20 billion to increase the food stamp benefit by over 13%; \$5 billion for a Public Housing Capital Fund for building repair and modernization; \$1.5 billion in homeless assistance grants for the Emergency Shelter Grant program; \$20 billion to provide nutrition assistance to modest-income families and to lift restrictions that limit the amount of time individuals can receive food stamps.

\$4.2 billion to help 7.5 million low-income disabled and elderly individuals by providing an additional SSI payment in 2009 equal to the average monthly federal payment under the program (approximately \$450 for an individual and \$630 for a couple); \$200 million to help local community organizations provide food, shelter, and support services to the nation's hungry, homeless, and people in economic crisis including one-month utility payments to prevent service cut-off and one-month rent or mortgage assistance to prevent evictions or help people leave shelters; and \$500 million to help the SSA process a steep rise in disability and retirement claims.

\$87 billion for a temporary increase (through the end of FY'10) in the Medicaid matching rate.