

March, 2013

Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI)
Fiscal Year 2014 Appropriations Recommendation- \$6 million

Background/ Funding History

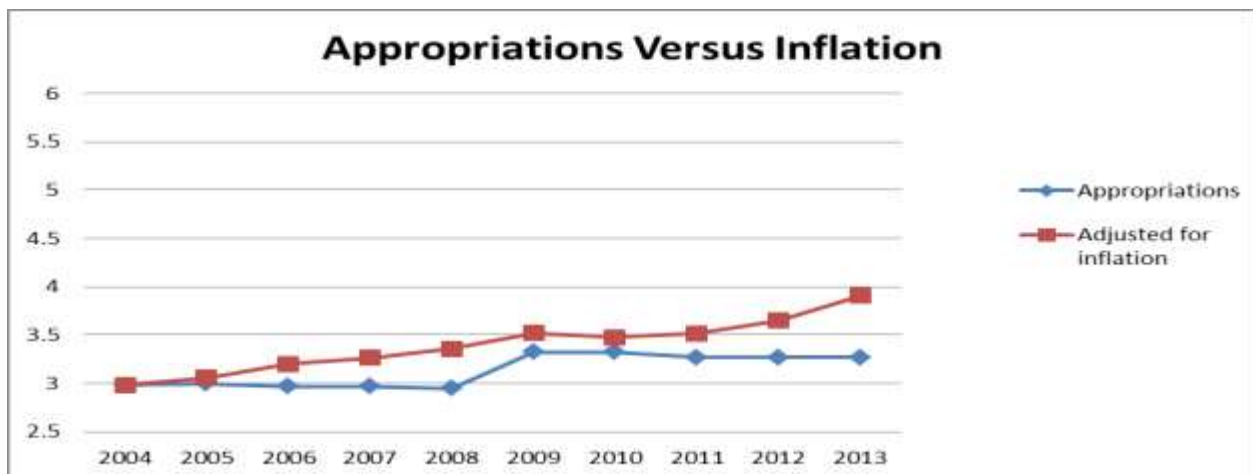
The Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Act was authorized as part of the Children’s Health Act of 2000. Within the TBI Act, Congress created a Protection and Advocacy program for individuals with Traumatic Brain Injuries. This enables every state to have a Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI) program, funded at a minimum of \$50,000 per state. While the program is administered by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau at the Health Resources Services Administration, TBI is not a child-only issue.

In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of individuals with a TBI – particularly because it is the signature injury of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many returning soldiers who sustained a TBI while serving overseas are facing life-altering challenges at home, such as mood changes and cognitive difficulties.

However, funding levels for the program have only had a minimal increase in the last six years. With an increase in the number of individuals with TBI, funding levels must also increase.

Effective Protection and Advocacy services for people with a TBI can lead both to reduced government expenditures and increased productivity, independence and community participation. However, advocates must possess specialized skills, due to the complex and multi-faceted impacts of a brain injury. In FY 2013, assuming level funding throughout the year, PATBI was funded at just \$3.3 million.

NDRN recommends a funding level of \$6 million for Fiscal Year 2014



Current Program Responsibilities

Researchers at the Mayo Clinic recently found that traumatic brain injury occurs in as many as 558 per 100,000 people, for a total of 1.7 million Americans, every year. Approximately 2 percent of the U.S. population, or about 5.3 million people, have a long-term or lifelong need for help to perform daily activities as a result of a TBI. Additionally,

- Incidence is generally higher among males, Native Americans, African-Americans, children younger than five and adults over 75.
- Studies have shown that as many as 23 percent of returning veterans from the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan sustained a TBI.

Individuals with a TBI have an array of advocacy needs including assistance finding, maintaining or advancing in employment, finding a home, accessing needed supports and services such as personal attendant services, assistive technology, and obtaining appropriate mental health, substance abuse, and rehabilitation services. Often these individuals, including returning veterans, are forced to remain in extremely expensive institutional settings far longer than necessary without the advocacy of the P&A.

To ensure each agency has the resources necessary to maintain critical protection and advocacy services for those currently living with a brain injury and the growing number of people joining their ranks – including so many of our returning war veterans -- PATBI funding must be increased.

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