

Support the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act

Dear Colleague,

I'm writing today to welcome you back to the 111th Congress, and **thank you for your support of the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act, which I first introduced in the 110th Congress (H.R. 5447)**. This critical legislation made significant progress in the last Congress with 82 cosponsors. Due to the urgency of the challenges we currently face as a society and the ability of professional social workers to address those challenges, **I hope that you will sign on to become an original-cosponsor and actively work to ensure passage of this legislation in the 111th Congress.**

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. Social workers provide essential services to individuals across the lifespan and have long been the professionals who guide people to critical resources, counsel them on important life decisions, and help them reach their full potential. However, **serious safety concerns, significant educational debt, and comparatively insufficient salaries have made it difficult to recruit new social workers and retain experienced social workers.** This will lead to a workforce unable to keep pace with increasing demand for social work services. Please join me by cosponsoring the "Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act," which is designed to address these challenges to the profession.

Current data shows that there are an estimated 1.4 million new cancer cases each year; the high school dropout rate in many vulnerable communities has risen above 50 percent; America's veterans now make up more than 25 percent of the homeless population; and 1 in 4 Americans will experience a diagnosable mental health disorder. It is impossible to address these complex issues without the expertise and assistance of professional social workers.

The Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act provides for valuable support to the social work profession. As a comprehensive piece of federal legislation, this Act will address current and future concerns for the profession to ensure a sufficient social work workforce so that millions of individuals across the nation can continue to receive necessary social work services. The proposed legislation includes the following elements:

- **Findings to exhibit the current state of the profession.**
- **The establishment of a Social Work Reinvestment Commission to analyze the current state of the profession and develop long-term recommendations and strategies to maximize the ability of the nation's social workers to serve their clients with expertise and care.**
- **The authorization of grants for demonstration programs in the areas of workplace improvements, research, education and training, and community based programs of excellence.**

Please support the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act, as it will enhance the well-being of our society in this critical time and provide necessary support

to those individuals choosing a career of service in this important profession. To cosponsor this bill, please contact Emily Khoury in the office of Representative Towns at 225-5936 or Emily.Khoury@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Edolphus "Ed" Towns
Member of Congress