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Social Work Reinvestment
Video Message

Written Remarks

I'm Betsy Clark, the Executive Director of the National Association of Social Workers in Washington, DC. I want to take this opportunity to thank the 20,000 social workers who have already written letters in support of a very important piece of legislation, the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act.

Your activism is the reason that 72 cosponsors in the House and 10 in the Senate have shown their support for this important legislation since its recent introduction. This bill has united all ten of the professional social workers in Congress and has strong bipartisan support. This would not be possible without the tremendous grassroots activism of social workers across the nation.

The Height Young Act is the most comprehensive bill ever introduced that addresses significant social work workforce issues that we are facing; issues like low salaries, high educational debt, and serious safety concerns; issues that are threatening the future of our profession. This bill will analyze these workforce challenges and determine the best course of action to address them. This is an important first step to ensure that the clients we work with can continue to receive our services for years to come.

Americans will increasingly need social work services, but the profession is not currently able to keep pace with this demand. Experienced social workers are being forced into other, better

paying careers and students are concerned that with so much debt, a social work degree is just not an option for them. The average social work student graduates with \$25,000 of educational debt and will take positions that pay very little more than that per year.

This moment is critical. The time is now. We must now stand up for ourselves and our profession the way that we stand up for others each day. If you have not already contacted your members of Congress in support of the Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act, I urge you to take this moment to build on the momentum of your 20,000 colleagues. Simply visit our advocacy website and send a preformed letter. It's that simple and it takes less than two minutes. This is one of the most important things you can do to ensure that the profession of social work exists in the future and that we can grow and thrive in the coming years. Thank you.