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CHAIRMAN

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Support H.R. 5447
The "Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr.
Social Work Reinvestment Act"

February 25, 2008

Dear Colleague:

Professional social workers seek to ensure full participation of all members of society by working with millions of individuals, their families, and communities to combat a range of social problems which limit our nation's health and potential. Unfortunately, current social work professional shortages, impending retirements, lack of incentives to attract and retain social workers, and lack of data on the efficacy of best practices for social workers all threaten the very fabric of our nation. Please join me by cosponsoring H.R. 5447, the "Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act," which is designed to address these important issues.


Current data shows that there are an estimated 1.3 million new cancer cases each year; the high school dropout rate among many vulnerable communities has risen above 50 percent; and America's veterans now make up more than 25 percent of the homeless population. It is impossible to overlook how these complex challenges place higher demands on our nation's social workers.

The "Dorothy I. Height and Whitney M. Young, Jr. Social Work Reinvestment Act" provides for valuable support to the social work profession. It is time to recruit new social workers, retrain experienced social workers, and reinvest in the profession. As a comprehensive piece of federal legislation, this Act will create opportunities for research on the social work profession's workforce shortage, the communities that social workers serve, and the areas in which the profession of social work can be improved. 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 social work profession, review emerging issues, and provide independent advice to Congress on social work policy.
- The authorization of grants for **demonstration programs** in the areas of social work research, workplace improvement, education, training, and community based programs of excellence; and
- A statement urging the establishment of a "**National Social Work Awareness Month.**"

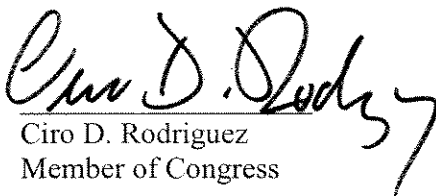
This legislation will allow us to gather additional information about the issues facing the profession and determine the best course of action to address them.

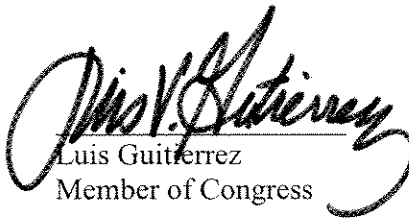
Please support H.R. 5447, as it will enhance the well-being of our society and provide crucial support to those individuals choosing a career of service in this important profession. To cosponsor this bill, please contact Jason Powell with the office of Rep. Towns at 225-5936 or Jason.Powell@mail.house.gov.

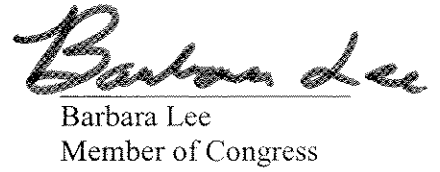

Edolphus "Ed" Towns
Member of Congress

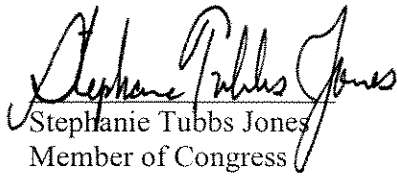
Sincerely,

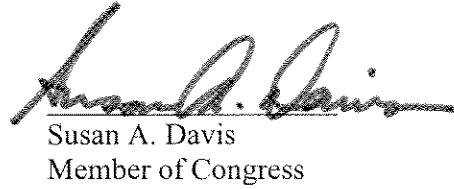

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