



# DEEP DIVE: HOW TO DO ADVOCACY AT THE FEDERAL AND STATE LEVEL

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American Mental Health Counselors Association  
2020 Fall Virtual Summit: State Chapter Leadership Training  
November 18, 2020

*The only organization working exclusively for the clinical mental health counseling profession.*



## DAVE BERGMAN BIOGRAPHY

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- President & CEO of Bergman Strategies, LLC--Government and Strategic Affairs Consulting Firm
  - AMHCA Government Affairs Consultant
- 10 Years as the Vice President of Legal and External Affairs/Chief Legal Officer with NBCC
  - Represented counselors before state and federal government
- 9 Years as the Director of Legal and Government Affairs with AAMFT
  - Represented MFTs before state and federal government
  - Oversaw state chapters
- Registered Federal Lobbyist
- Influenced legislation and regulations in every state

*The only organization working exclusively for the clinical mental health counseling profession.*

# OVERVIEW

Election

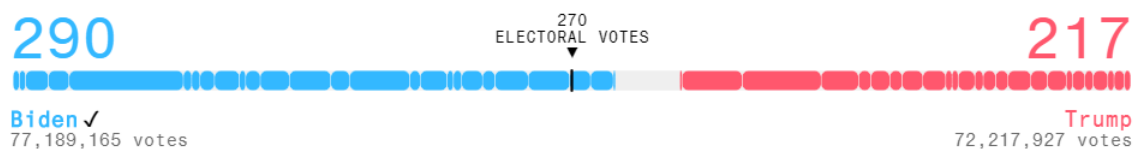
Federal

State

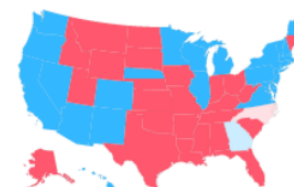
Grassroots

# 2020 Election Dashboard

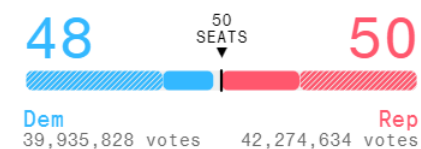
## Race for President



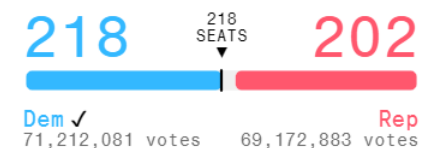
Swing States	PA	NV	GA	NC	AZ
Electoral Votes	20	6	16	15	11
TRUMP	49%	47%	49%	50%	49%
BIDEN	50%	50%	50%	49%	49%
Est. Vote %	≈99%	≈95%	≈99%	≈99%	≈99%



## Senate Results



## House Results



Election slides provided by Bloomberg Government

## Dates to Watch

Week of Nov. 16: House leadership elections

Dec. 14: Electoral College delegations meet and vote

Jan. 3, 2021: 117th Congress officially convenes, but likely to shift to Monday, Jan. 4

Jan. 5: Georgia Senate runoff elections

Jan. 6: Joint Session of Congress to count electoral votes and declare official results

Jan. 20: Presidential inauguration

# 2020 Election Results

## Congress

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# Senate By the Numbers

## Georgia Runoffs on Jan. 5

Sen. David Perdue (R) faces Jon Ossoff (D)

Sen. Kelly Loeffler (R) faces Raphael Warnock (D)

## Incoming Freshmen

Bill Hagerty (R-Tenn.)

John Hickenlooper (D-Colo.)

Mark Kelly (D-Ariz.)

Ben Ray Lujan (D-N.M.)

Cynthia Lummis (R-Wyo.)

Roger Marshall (R-Kan.)

Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.)

	No Race	2020 Win	Total
Republicans	30	19	50
Democrats/Independents	35	13	48
Runoffs	-	-	2

Source: The Associated Press as of Nov. 11 as of 9 p.m. EST

Note: Independents caucus with the Democrats

## Defeated Incumbents

Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) defeated by Hickenlooper

Doug Jones (D-Ala.) defeated by Tuberville

Martha McSally (R-Ariz.) defeated by Kelly

## Did Not Seek Re-election in 2020

Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.)

Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.)

Pat Roberts (R-Kan.)

Tom Udall (D-N.M.)

## Senate Big Picture: Control Hinges on January Runoffs

- ▶ Republicans have a 50-48 advantage, but control of the chamber will come down to Jan. 5 runoffs for two Georgia seats
- ▶ If Democrats win both seats, then Vice President Kamala Harris would break a 50-50 tie in their favor
  - ▶ In this scenario Democrats would have full control of government, albeit by the slimmest of margins, as they control the House by just a handful of seats
- ▶ If Republicans win just one of the Georgia seats, then Kentucky's Mitch McConnell would remain majority leader and would have the power to curb President Joe Biden's agenda



# GEORGIA: Perdue and Ossoff Prep for January Runoff



Jon Ossoff



David Perdue

Sen. **David Perdue** (R) is seeking a second term against **Jon Ossoff** (D), a documentary film producer who raised \$30 million in 2017 for a nationally watched House special election

- Perdue defeated Michelle Nunn (D) in 2014, 53%-45%

## Race Results

### Senate Results

This race will go to a runoff election with the top candidates advancing.

	VOTES	PCT.
● David Perdue * REP	2,458,638	49.7%
● Jon Ossoff DEM	2,372,030	48.0%
● Shane Hazel LIB	114,884	2.3%

\* INCUMBENT

PAST THREE ELECTIONS

2014 R 2008 R 2002 R

How many votes have been counted?

4.95M out of 4.71-5.20M estimated total votes



Total vote estimates assume historic voter turnout.

Turnout estimates have a margin of error of +/-5%.

Runoff

# GEORGIA: Loeffler Seeks to Hold Seat in Special Runoff



Sen. Kelly Loeffler (R) will face pastor Raphael Warnock (D) in a Jan. 5, 2021, runoff

- Loeffler was appointed in January 2020 to succeed Johnny Isakson (R), who was re-elected 55%-41% in 2016
- Multiple candidates shared the same all-party ballot in the special election

## Race Results

	VOTES	PCT.
Raphael Warnock DEM	1,615,384	32.9%
Kelly Loeffler * REP	1,271,130	25.9%
Doug Collins REP	978,917	19.9%
OTHERS »	1,042,464	21.2%

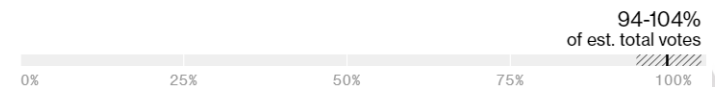
\*INCUMBENT

PAST THREE ELECTIONS

2016 R 2010 R 2004 R

How many votes have been counted?

4.91M out of 4.71-5.20M estimated total votes



Total vote estimates assume historic voter turnout.  
Turnout estimates have a margin of error of +/-5%.

Runoff

# Senate Competitiveness Ratings

SOLID DEMOCRATIC				LEAN DEMOCRATIC				TOSS UPS				LEAN REPUBLICAN				SOLID REPUBLICAN			
	DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%
DE	59%	38%	98%	AZ-S	51%	49%	>100%	GA R	48%	50%	100%	AK	38%	58%	73%	AR	—	67%	>100%
IL	53%	40%	87%	CO	53%	44%	98%	GA-S R	33%	26%	99%	AL	40%	60%	95%	ID	33%	63%	>100%
MA	66%	34%	92%	MI	50%	48%	99%	IA	45%	52%	95%	KS	42%	53%	95%	LA	19%	59%	94%
MN	49%	44%	98%					ME	42%	51%	97%	KY	38%	58%	100%	NE	26%	68%	86%
NH	57%	41%	93%					MT	45%	55%	>100%	MS	42%	56%	85%	OK	33%	63%	92%
NJ	57%	41%	90%					NC	47%	49%	>100%	TX	44%	54%	97%	SD	34%	66%	98%
NM	52%	46%	>100%					SC	44%	54%	>100%					TN	35%	62%	99%
OR	57%	39%	>100%													WV	27%	70%	94%
RI	66%	34%	93%													WY	27%	73%	94%
VA	56%	44%	97%																

Source: The Associated Press as of Nov. 11 as of 9 p.m. EST; the Cook Political Report; Percentage of votes reported is based on estimated turnout from a Bloomberg News model; [read more about Bloomberg model](#)

Note: Percentage of votes reported is based on estimated turnout from a Bloomberg News model. Even when the vote totals reach 100%, it doesn't necessarily mean that the count is final. Turnout estimates have a margin of error of +/-5%, and values can exceed 100% when turnout is higher than the model expected. Current percentages assume typical voter turnout. This assumption may change in response to early turnout reports.

# House By the Numbers

## Defeated in General

**CA-48** – Harley Rouda (D)  
**FL-26** – Debbie Mucarsel-Powell (D)  
**FL-27** – Donna Shalala (D)  
**IA-01** – Abby Finkenauer (D)  
**MN-07** – Collin Peterson (D)  
**OK-05** – Kendra Horn (D)  
**SC-01** – Joe Cunningham (D)  
**NM-02** – Xochitl Torres Small (D)

## Defeated in Primary

**CO-03** – Scott Tipton (R)  
**FL-15** – Ross Spano (R)  
**IA-04** – Steve King (R)  
**IL-03** – Dan Lipinski (D)  
**KS-02** – Steve Watkins (R)  
**MO-01** – Lacy Clay (D)  
**NY-16** – Eliot Engel (D)  
**VA-05** – Denver Riggleman (R)

## Defeated for Other Office

**AL-01** – Bradley Byrne (R), lost Senate primary  
**GA-09** – Doug Collins (R), defeated in Senate special election  
**MA-04** – Joe Kennedy (D), lost Senate primary  
**UT-01** – Rob Bishop (R), lost primary for lieutenant governor

## Elected to Other Office

**CA-08** – Paul Cook (R), elected to San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors  
**KS-01** – Roger Marshall (R), elected to Senate  
**MT-AL** – Greg Gianforte (R), elected governor  
**NM-03** – Ben Ray Luján (D), elected to Senate  
**WA-10** – Denny Heck (D), elected lieutenant governor

	2020 Win	Incumbent Losses
Republicans	202	0
Democrats	218	8
Uncalled/Runoff	15	-

Source: The Associated Press as of Nov. 11 as of 9 p.m. EST

## Did Not Seek Re-election

**AL-02** – Martha Roby (R)  
**CA-53** – Susan Davis (D)  
**FL-03** – Ted Yoho (R)  
**FL-19** – Francis Rooney (R)  
**GA-07** – Rob Woodall (R)  
**HI-02** – Tulsi Gabbard (D)  
**IA-02** – Dave Loebsack (D)  
**IL-15** – John Shimkus (R)  
**IN-01** – Pete Visclosky (D)  
**IN-05** – Susan Brooks (R)  
**LA-05** – Ralph Abraham (R)  
**MI-03** – Justin Amash (L)  
**MI-10** – Paul Mitchell (R)  
**NC-02** – George Holding (R)  
**NC-06** – Mark Walker (R)  
**NY-02** – Peter King (R)  
**NY-15** – José Serrano (D)  
**NY-17** – Nita Lowey (D)  
**OR-02** – Greg Walden (R)  
**TN-01** – Phil Roe (R)  
**TX-11** – Michael Conaway (R)  
**TX-13** – Mac Thornberry (R)  
**TX-17** – Bill Flores (R)  
**TX-22** – Pete Olson (R)  
**TX-23** – Will Hurd (R)  
**TX-24** – Kenny Marchant (R)  
**WI-05** – Jim Sensenbrenner (R)

## House Big Picture: Democrats Keep Control, But Barely

- ▶ Democrats failed to expand their majority and missed pickup opportunities in states such as Illinois and Texas; Republicans protected incumbents and added seats
- ▶ At least eight Democratic incumbents lost their seats
  - ▶ Seven were elected in the 2018 “blue wave” that swept the party into the majority
  - ▶ Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson, who has represented his Minnesota district since 1991
- ▶ Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California will have less room to maneuver
  - ▶ She’s faced questions from her caucus about strategy and priorities leading up to the election
  - ▶ More progressives have been elected and are expected to add additional pressure
- ▶ Tension could build ahead of 2022 elections
  - ▶ The party in control of the White House historically has lost seats in midterms
  - ▶ Democrats will have a narrower majority to defend heading into that election

# House Competitiveness Ratings

LEAN DEMOCRATIC				LEAN DEMOCRATIC				TOSS UPS				TOSS UPS				LEAN REPUBLICAN				LEAN REPUBLICAN			
	DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%
AZ-1	52%	48%	>100%	NJ-3	53%	45%	97%	AR-2	44%	56%	95%	NM-2	46%	54%	99%	AK-1	42%	58%	72%	NC-9	44%	56%	>100%
CA-10	56%	44%	92%	NJ-7	52%	48%	91%	AZ-6	48%	52%	96%	NY-2	41%	58%	76%	CA-4	44%	56%	>100%	NC-11	42%	54%	>100%
CA-39	49%	51%	99%	NV-3	49%	45%	95%	CA-21	49%	51%	85%	NY-11	42%	58%	77%	CA-22	46%	54%	>100%	NY-1	39%	61%	77%
CA-48	49%	51%	>100%	NV-4	51%	46%	96%	CA-25	50%	50%	>100%	NY-22	43%	54%	80%	CA-50	46%	54%	>100%	OH-10	42%	58%	95%
FL-26	48%	52%	>100%	NY-19	51%	48%	82%	IA-1	49%	51%	95%	NY-24	38%	58%	78%	CO-3	45%	51%	98%	OH-12	42%	55%	96%
FL-27	49%	51%	>100%	OR-4	52%	46%	>100%	IA-2	50%	50%	92%	OH-1	45%	52%	94%	FL-15	45%	55%	98%	PA-1	43%	57%	>100%
GA-6	55%	45%	97%	PA-7	52%	48%	92%	IL-13	45%	55%	91%	OK-5	48%	52%	93%	FL-16	44%	56%	>100%	PA-16	41%	59%	98%
GA-7	51%	49%	>100%	PA-8	52%	48%	87%	IN-5	46%	50%	98%	PA-10	47%	53%	>100%	FL-18	41%	56%	>100%	TX-2	42%	56%	92%
IA-3	49%	48%	96%	PA-17	51%	49%	>100%	MI-3	47%	53%	99%	TX-10	45%	53%	99%	KS-2	41%	55%	97%	TX-3	43%	55%	95%
IL-14	51%	49%	99%	SC-1	49%	51%	>100%	MN-1	46%	49%	99%	TX-21	45%	52%	99%	KY-6	41%	57%	>100%	TX-6	44%	53%	97%
IL-17	52%	48%	92%	TX-7	51%	47%	92%	MN-7	40%	53%	99%	TX-22	45%	52%	93%	MI-6	40%	56%	99%	TX-25	42%	56%	98%
ME-2	53%	47%	96%	TX-23	47%	51%	>100%	MO-2	45%	52%	93%	UT-4	47%	47%	>100%	MT-1	44%	56%	>100%	TX-31	44%	53%	98%
MI-8	51%	47%	99%	TX-24	47%	49%	89%	NE-2	46%	51%	94%	VA-5	47%	53%	>100%	NC-8	47%	53%	>100%	WA-3	44%	56%	>100%
MI-11	50%	48%	>100%	TX-32	52%	46%	94%	NJ-2	46%	52%	100%												
MN-2	48%	46%	>100%	VA-2	51%	46%	96%																
NC-2	63%	35%	>100%	VA-7	51%	49%	>100%																
NC-6	62%	38%	99%	WA-8	52%	48%	>100%																
NH-1	51%	46%	94%	WI-3	51%	49%	95%																

Source: The Associated Press as of Nov. 11 as of 9 p.m. EST; the Cook Political Report; percentage of votes reported is based on estimated turnout from a Bloomberg News model; [read more about Bloomberg model](#)

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# 2020 Election Results

## President

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## Presidential Big Picture: Joe Biden is President-Elect

- Race was called Nov. 7 after Pennsylvania and Nevada were projected to give former Vice President Joe Biden more than the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win
- President Donald Trump rejected the outcome and has claimed widespread voting irregularities and has filed lawsuits
  - So far, none of Trump's lawsuits have gained traction or demonstrated that the results of the election can be overturned
- Biden, who turns 78 on Nov. 20, is the oldest president-elect in U.S. history and the first to oust a sitting commander-in-chief after one term since 1992
  - Senator Kamala Harris, 56, will be the first Black and Indian-American woman to serve as vice president



# Presidential Competitiveness Ratings

SOLID DEMOCRATIC				LEAN DEMOCRATIC				TOSS UPS				LEAN REPUBLICAN				SOLID REPUBLICAN			
	DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%		DEM	REP	EST. VOTE%
CA	64%	34%	94%	AZ	49%	49%	>100%	FL	48%	51%	99%	AK	39%	57%	71%	AL	36%	62%	94%
CT	59%	39%	97%	CO	55%	42%	97%	GA	50%	49%	99%	IN	41%	57%	95%	AR	35%	63%	92%
DC	93%	5%	83%	ME	53%	44%	97%	IA	45%	53%	95%	KS	41%	56%	95%	ID	33%	64%	>100%
DE	59%	40%	98%	MI	51%	48%	99%	NC	49%	50%	>100%	MO	41%	57%	95%	KY	36%	62%	98%
HI	64%	34%	>100%	MN	53%	45%	98%	OH	45%	53%	91%	MT	41%	57%	>100%	LA	40%	58%	96%
IL	56%	42%	86%	NH	53%	46%	93%	TX	46%	52%	97%	SC	43%	55%	>100%	MS	39%	60%	84%
MA	66%	33%	93%	NV	50%	47%	96%					UT	38%	58%	100%	ND	32%	65%	90%
MD	64%	34%	83%	PA	50%	49%	94%								NE	39%	59%	93%	
NJ	58%	41%	89%	VA	54%	44%	96%								OK	32%	65%	92%	
NM	54%	44%	100%	WI	50%	49%	97%								SD	36%	62%	97%	
NY	56%	43%	74%												TN	37%	61%	>100%	
OR	57%	41%	100%												WV	30%	69%	94%	
RI	59%	39%	95%												WY	27%	70%	93%	
VT	66%	31%	99%																
WA	59%	39%	>100%																

Source: The Associated Press as of Nov. 11 as of 9 p.m. EST; the Cook Political Report; Percentage of votes reported is based on estimated turnout from a Bloomberg News model; [read more about Bloomberg model](#)

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# 2020 Election Results

## Governors

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## Governors Big Picture: Only Montana Changed Party Control

Republican Greg Gianforte, Montana's at-large congressman, will become the state's 25th governor, winning the only close race out of 11 gubernatorial contests in the country

- He replaced Democrat Steve Bullock, who was term-limited and lost his Senate race

The remaining gubernatorial races ended as expected

- In the only other open seat, Utah Republican Lt. Gov. Spencer Cox defeated Democrat Chris Peterson, a professor of business law
- Nine incumbents won re-election

The results signaled that most voters were satisfied with their incumbent state executive, especially in confronting Covid-19 and its attendant economic upheaval

# FEDERAL

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# 2020 CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

November						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



House only



Senate only



Both in session

# Spending Bills, Stimulus Top Agenda for Lame-Duck Congress

- ▶ Congress returns with packed agenda, few working days
  - ▶ Action will be needed to keep government open past Dec. 11
    - ▶ Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) agreed to try to pass an omnibus appropriations package in December
  - ▶ Leaders expressed interest in reaching agreement on a coronavirus stimulus during the lame-duck session, after negotiations stalled before the election
  - ▶ Annual defense authorization will likely be considered in December
- ▶ 2021 reauthorizations await the 117th Congress
  - ▶ Surface transportation, Transportation Security Administration authorizations expire Sept. 30, 2021
  - ▶ National Flood Insurance Program also set to expire Sept. 30, 2021

# 116th CONGRESS: COUNSELOR LEGISLATION

Bill Number	Bill Title	Summary
S. 286	Mental Health Access Improvement Act	CMHC Medicare
S. 2500	MH Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act	LRP for CMHCs in rural areas
S. 2991	Veteran Overmedication and Suicide Prevention Act	VA CMHC staffing report
<b>S. 785</b>	<b>Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019</b>	<b>Counselor Occupational Series and VA staffing plan</b>
H.R. 100	Veteran Overmedication and Suicide Prevention Act	VA CMHC staffing report
H.R. 945	Mental Health Access Improvement Act	CMHC Medicare
H.R. 2431	MH Professionals Workforce Shortage Loan Repayment Act	LRP for CMHCs in rural areas
H.R. 2452	Medicare for America Act	Medicare for All, but only existing providers; CMHCs eligible for LRP
H.R. 4488	Solitary Confinement Study and Reform Act	Solitary confinement bill
H.R. 4994	TRICARE Payment And Reimbursement Study Act	Study on TRICARE MH payments
H.R. 5029	VA Suicide Prevention Services Act	Suicide Prevention Coordinator
H.R. 5575	Primary and Behavioral Health Care Access Act	3 free behavioral health visits
H.R. 8145	To provide for a staffing improvement plan and occupational series for licensed professional mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists of Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.	Counselor Occupational Series and VA staffing plan

# 2020 COUNSELOR LEGISLATIVE SUCCESS

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- President signs **S. 785**, the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019
- S. 785 directs the creation of an Occupational Series for mental health counselors and a study of VA hiring of mental health counselors
- **S. 785 was a top congressional priority for AMHCA**





# HIGHLIGHTS OF S. 785

- Mandates creation of a federal Occupational Series for mental health counselors and MFTs
- Requires a study by the U.S. Comptroller General on:
  - Staffing levels of MHCs and MFTs
  - Impediments to education, training, and hiring of MHCs
  - Goals for increasing hiring of MHCs
  - Steps to create an Occupational Series
  - Steps to ensure that the national, regional, and local professional standards boards are comprised of only mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists and that the liaison from the Department to such boards is a mental health counselor.
  - Assessment of the participation of MHCs in the trainee program and any impediments
- Creates Scholarships for counselors who are willing to work in the VA Readjustment Counseling Program



# WHY IS AN OCCUPATIONAL SERIES IMPORTANT

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- Allows the federal government to hire under the title mental health counselor instead of generic Series that apply to many professions
- Provides professional identity and recognition to mental health counselors in the federal government
- Facilitates hiring, promotion, and appropriate scope of authority for MHCs
- Allows MHCs to retain parallel positions across federal agencies
- Provides parity with social workers and psychologists have had their own Occupational Series for decades



# OCCUPATIONAL SERIES HISTORY

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- 2006—President signs law recognizing MHCs as VA mental health professionals
- 2009—Counseling organizations meet with Congressional staff and VA leadership on implementation of the law
- 2011—VA submits letter requesting OPM create Occupational Series for MHCs
- 2011—OPM meets with counseling organizations
- 2014—OPM postpones the Series indefinitely
- 2014—Senators send letters to VA and OPM urging creation of Series
- 2014—Congress includes report on the Series in appropriations bill
- 2015—OPM issues a report on the status of the Counselor Series
- 2015—Legislation introduced urging the creation of Series
- 2015—Congress includes language studying Series in authorizing bills
- 2016—Congress includes language studying Series in authorizing bills
- 2017—Congress includes language urging Series in appropriations bill
- 2019—Congress includes language urging Series in authorizing bills
- 9/23/20—Congress passes S. 785 directing creation of Occupational Series
- 10/17/20—President signs S. 785 directing creation of Occupational Series



# OCCUPATIONAL SERIES HISTORY

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- Senate sponsors of S. 785, Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Jon Tester (D-MT), are the Chairman and Ranking Member of Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
- Extensive history trying to increase hiring of counselors and MFTs because KS and MT can't hire enough mental health professionals
- VA fought the process from the beginning
  - 4 years for qualification standards
  - Refusal to request Occupational Series
  - Refusal to include LPMHCs in trainee program
  - Refusal to staff professional standards boards with LPMHCs
- S. 785 introduced in March 2019
- Senate passed S. 785 in August 2020
- House passed S. 785 in September 2020
- President signed S. 785 in October 2020



# 116<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS: MEDICARE

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House Bill—H.R. 945 Sponsored by  
Representatives Mike Thompson  
(D-CA) and John Katko (R-NY)

Senate Bill—S. 286 Sponsored by  
Senators John Barrasso (R-WY) and  
Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)



# MEDICARE HISTORY

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- First bill in 2000
- Over 40 bills in 20 years
- Passed the Senate in 2003 and 2005
- Passed the House in 2007 and 2009



# 2020 MEDICARE HIGHLIGHTS

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- House Energy and Commerce (E&C) Committee passes amended H.R. 945 on September 9, 2020
- H.R. 945 was included in a E&C Committee legislative hearing in July 2020
- Record cosponsors: House 119/Senate 31
- 2020 Bipartisan Policy Center Report
- Mental Health Liaison Group letter with 43 national organizations
- Congressional Briefing with the Michael J Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research



# AMHCA MEDICARE ADVOCACY

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- AMHCA is working with partners from the Medicare Mental Health Workforce Coalition
  - AMHCA, ACA, NBCC, AAMFT, CAMFT, NCBH, and ABHW
- Medicare House cosponsors re-elected (Thompson and Katko; Senators not up for re-election)
- AMHCA is seeking inclusion in Medicare extenders this Congress but chances are slim
- If unsuccessful, Medicare the House and Senate bills will be reintroduced with new numbers in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress







# STATE

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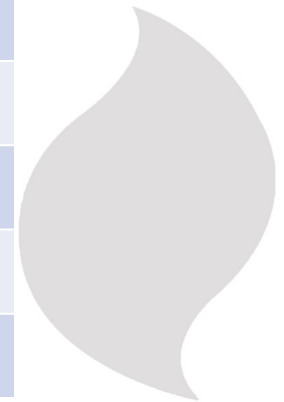
## STATE ADVOCACY

### 2020 Legislation and Regulation

- 135 bills with the term “mental health counselor” or “licensed professional counselor” (31 laws)
- 150 regulations “mental health counselor” or “licensed professional counselor”

## STATE ADVOCACY

2020 Counselor Bills Examples		
Bill Number	Summary	Status
CO H.B. 1206	Counselor Licensing Board Sunset Extension	Law
FL H.B. 713/S.B. 230	Counselor Licensure Revisions; CACREP 2025	Law
IN H.B. 1183	CMHC diagnosis bill	Died
SD S.B. 18	Counselor Licensure Reform Bill	Law
UT S.B. 68	Counselor Licensure Reform Bill	Law
VA H.B. 5046	Medicaid Telemedicine Bill	Law



# STATE ADVOCACY: LICENSURE

Scope of  
Practice  
(Diagnosis)

Education

Experience  
Requirements

Supervision

Examination

Title

# STATE ADVOCACY: REIMBURSEMENT/RECOGNITION

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- Medicaid
- State Employees Health Plan
- Insurance/Managed Care
- State Occupational Classification
- Portability—Interstate Compact, Universal Licensure, NCLEP 2.0, AMHCA Regional Collaboration
- Board Consolidation/Elimination



# GRASSROOTS

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# GRASSROOTS

Legislators  
(federal and  
state) care about  
the views of their  
constituents

Both quantity and  
quality of  
advocacy is  
important

The bigger the  
district or state,  
the more  
correspondence  
they receive



# GRASSROOTS

Impact is based  
on type of  
correspondence  
(effectiveness  
from lowest to  
highest)

- Emails
- Phone calls
- Personal letters
- Meetings with staff
- Meetings with legislators
- Relationships with staff
- Relationships with legislators





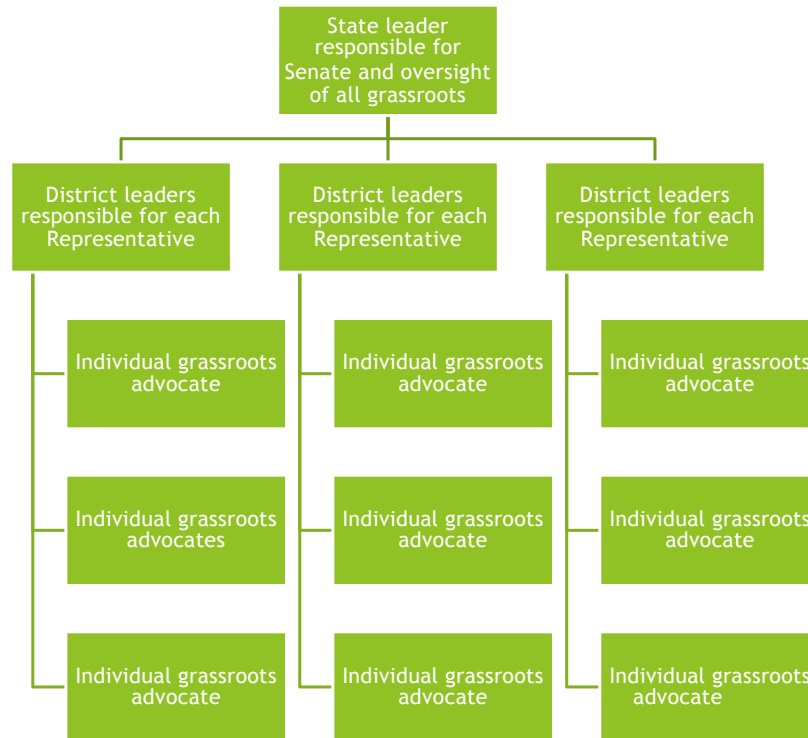
# GRASSROOTS

## Type of Communication

- Be brief
- Be specific—please cosponsor H.R. 945
- Be polite and professional
- Be persistent
  - Always follow up with a thank you
  - Always request a response—will Rep. XX cosponsor H.R. 945?



# GRASSROOTS



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ▶ Be aware of counselor licensure and reimbursement in your state
- ▶ Monitor state legislation and regulations
- ▶ Maintain a presence at your state legislature
- ▶ Have a representative attend counselor licensure board meetings
- ▶ Create a grassroots advocacy network of counselors to support state and federal issues
- ▶ Respond to AMHCA calls to action on federal issues

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**THANK YOU**  
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