NASW-NYC Action Alert Re: the Improving Access to Mental Health Act (S. 870/H.R. 2035)

The NASW-NYC Chapter calls on NYC social workers to contact their representatives to encourage them to co-sponsor the Improving Access to Mental Health Act (S. 870/H.R. 2035).

You can find an Issue Brief on this legislation, an HBAI Issue Brief and FAQs.

The Improving Access to Mental Health Act (S. 870/H.R. 2035) will:

- **Increase Medicare Reimbursement Rates for CSWs:** The bill aligns Medicare payment for CSWs with that of most other non-physician providers by increasing the reimbursement rate from 75% to 85% of the physician fee schedule.

- **Increase Access to Mental Health Services for Residents of Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF):** Currently, independent CSWs who are not employed by the SNF are unable to seek reimbursement under Medicare Part B for providing psychotherapy services to SNF residents receiving care under Medicare Part A. S. 870/H.R. 2035 would rectify this problem by excluding CSW services from SNF consolidated billing.

- **Increase Supports for Medicare Beneficiaries Coping with Physical Health Conditions:** Although Health and Behavior Assessment and Intervention (HBAI) services are within the scope of practice for CSWs, Medicare currently only reimburses CSWs for the “diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses.” S. 870/H.R. 2035 would broaden this narrow definition of CSW services to enable CSWs to receive Medicare reimbursement for HBAI services, which are cognitive, behavioral, social and psychophysiological interventions to prevent, treat, and improve physical health and well-being.

To find your representatives, please utilize the following resources:

FIND YOUR LEGISLATORS -- www.commoncause.org

FIND YOUR REPRESENTATIVE -- https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative

FIND YOUR NYC COUNCIL MEMBER -- https://council.nyc.gov/find-my-district-widget/

CONTACT INFO FOR ALL NYC COUNCIL MEMBERS -- https://council.nyc.gov/districts/

**USE THIS SAMPLE EMAIL FOR YOUR COMMUNICATIONS. JUST CLICK HERE!**