

PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY
Legislative Update

APA Testifies in Support of HIV/AIDS Legislation

On April 18, 2005, **Isa Fernández, PhD**, a member of APA's Committee on Psychology and AIDS (COPA) and Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine at Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale gave an invited presentation to the staff of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on behalf of APA. She provided APA's recommendations on the re-authorization of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resource Emergency (CARE) Act. This legislation, due to expire on September 30, funds primary health and support services, including mental health and substance abuse services, for individuals with HIV/AIDS. The presentation was given during the weekly meetings set aside by the Senate Committee to hear from key stakeholders about their views on the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act. The development of the presentation and recommendations was a collaborative effort among APA's Public Policy Office, Office on AIDS, and COPA.

APA Lends Voice to Health Disparities Rally at U.S. Capitol

Lori Valencia Greene of APA's Public Policy Office was invited to represent APA at an April 7th press conference/rally called by the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) to kick off their Spring Health Braintrust Conference. Rep. Donna Christian-Christensen (D-VI), who chairs the CBC Health Braintrust, organized the rally to bring attention to the tools necessary to eliminate health disparities in this country. Greene's remarks focused on the need for biomedical and behavioral researchers to work together, the need for the federal government to direct increased attention and resources to the elimination of health disparities, and the need for socioeconomic policies to change the status of those living in poverty. Other speakers included CBC Chair Mel Watt (D-NC) and representatives of the American Public Health Association, the Association of Community Health Centers, National Medical Association, and the Association of Rural Health. Since 1999, APA's Public Policy Office has taken the lead in advocating for the role of behavior in federal efforts to eliminate health disparities.