

## Up to the Minute

OACBHA UPDATE

**April 23, 2008**

### **NEARLY 20 PERCENT OF TROOPS SUFFER FROM DEPRESSION OR PTSD**

A report released last week by the Rand Corporation included a survey of 1,965 service members including those still in the military as well as veterans who have left the services. The study found that about 300,000 U.S. troops who have been serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or major depression. Of those 300,000, only about half have sought help for their PTSD or depression within the past year. About 50% of those who sought care reported that their treatment was "minimally adequate". The report recommended that improvements be made in mental health care within the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs and throughout the U.S. mental health care system so that servicemen and veterans may be better served. To view the report in its entirety, please visit: <http://rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG720/>.

### **FILLING THE HOLE BETWEEN STATE AND FEDERAL CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROGRAMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

Due to the federal government rejecting Ohio's proposal to expand Medicaid for children up to 300% of the federal poverty level (FPL), Ohio now has a gap between the state-funded Children with Special Needs Buy-In program and the federal Medicaid State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) program. Policy makers are discussing a plan to adjust the Children with Special Needs Buy-In program financial eligibility criteria to fill the gap between the 250% FPL for Medicaid SCHIP and the current 300% FPL for the Children with Special Needs Buy-In program. It is estimated that such a change would cost approximately \$10 million in fiscal year 2009. Additionally, Governor Strickland is considering a lawsuit against the federal government for blocking the proposed SCHIP expansion up to 300% of the FPL. To learn more about the state-funded Children with Special Needs Buy-In program, visit <http://www.jfs.ohio.gov/ohp/cbi/factsheet.pdf>.

### **KENO RULES PASS THROUGH JCARR**

The Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) held a hearing Monday on the new rules authorizing the expansion of gambling to include keno. Establishing keno games in restaurants and bars was proposed by Governor Strickland to generate revenue to aid in filling the state's budget shortfall. JCARR decided to allow the keno rules to stand, leaving only one potential legislative barrier to the Strickland Administration's plan, the Controlling Board.

### **STATE TAX INCREASE ON THE HORIZON?**

The Center for Community Solutions released their latest issue of *State Budgeting Matters*. The report outlines anticipated demands on a rapidly declining state general revenue fund and poses the question of whether a state tax increase is inevitable for Ohio. To view the report, visit: [www.communitysolutions.com/images/upload/resources/sbmv4n4\\_2.pdf](http://www.communitysolutions.com/images/upload/resources/sbmv4n4_2.pdf).

### **DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN LAWSUIT WITH VETERANS' GROUPS**

Veterans for Common Sense and Veterans United for Truth brought a lawsuit against the Department of Veterans Affairs hoping to force the government to improve procedures for treating former soldiers, especially those suffering from combat trauma and other mental health issues. The veterans groups believe that the government is ignoring a mental health crisis, while the Department of Veterans Affairs stated that they have added 3,700 mental health care professionals within the last two years to help improve treatment. The lawsuit does not seek monetary damages but it would like the court to intervene to force the department run more efficiently. To read the article in its entirety, please visit: [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/22/washington/22vets.html?\\_r=1&ref=us&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/22/washington/22vets.html?_r=1&ref=us&oref=slogin).

For more information about behavioral health issues in Ohio please visit:

[www.oacbha.org](http://www.oacbha.org)

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