

NASVH Washington Legislative Update – May 4, 2006

STATE HOME CONSTRUCTION FUNDING GETS INCREASE FROM HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies just completed its markup of the FY 2007 appropriations bill and the result is very encouraging for State Homes. Chairman Jim Walsh (NY) proposed and the Committee approved State Home construction grant funding of \$105 million for FY 2007, a \$20 million increase above what the Administration had proposed and the House Veterans' Affairs Committee had recommended earlier this year.

In addition, the Subcommittee voted to ensure that at least \$20 million of the \$105 million be reserved to fund life/safety modifications. This provision was inserted to ensure that no single large ongoing construction project would consume all of next year's Construction Grant budget.

Many steps remain in the FY 2007 appropriations process, including a crucial Senate Appropriations markup, but this early success is a very positive sign. NASVH's organized advocacy for restoring funding to the Construction Grant program, including visits made by State Home officials to over 100 Members of the House and Senate during March's Midwinter Meeting, was an important factor in this success.

In the weeks and months ahead, NASVH will continue working with both the House and the Senate to ensure that a sufficient Construction Grant funding level for FY 2007 is included in the final Appropriations bill that goes to the President's desk later this year.