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United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: The Elder Abuse Victims Act of 2009**

Dear Representative:

The American Bar Association urges you to vote “yes” on H.R. 448, the Elder Abuse Victims Act of 2009, legislation that we understand will be brought to the floor of the House under Suspension of the Rules tomorrow. The ABA supports enactment of the legislation as a significant step in addressing the inexcusable and growing national problem of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation—a tragedy that is estimated to cause serious harm to as many as two million people each year. That estimate does not reflect abuse of residents of long-term care facilities and thus is likely quite low. Additionally, the problem is estimated to grow as the older population burgeons.

Elder justice is central to any viable notion of the rule of law and social justice. The serious problems faced daily by victims of elder abuse cannot be remedied unless the justice system is given the resources to address those problems effectively. Elder abuse is a criminal violation, yet historically the justice system has handed the issue off to social services personnel who cannot adequately address the problem on their own. Currently there are very limited resources and expertise available to prosecutors to address elder abuse. H.R. 448 would establish vitally necessary specialized elder abuse prosecution and research programs and activities to aid victims of elder abuse and to provide relevant training to prosecutors and others who work in law enforcement.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely yours,



Thomas M. Susman