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## **APA Honors Texas Congressman with Highest Award in Advocacy**

**ARLINGTON, Va. (Oct. 5, 2009)** – The American Psychiatric Association presented Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, with the Jacob K. Javits Award for Public Service in recognition of his dedication and hard work on behalf of all of those who live with mental illnesses.

Rep. Doggett used his coveted seat on the House Committee on Ways & Means to ensure two crucial measures were included in the 2008 Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act to help those with mental illnesses access the psychiatric medication they need. The law passed the long sought-after Medicare Part D coverage of benzodiazepines, and a requirement that Part D cover “all or substantially all” medications of antipsychotic and antidepressant classes. The law also marked the end of the discriminatory 50 percent coinsurance for mental health services in Medicare.

“Rep. Doggett has done a great service to the Medicare patients who need these critical protections in coverage allowing them to avoid interruption in care and to remain functional,” said APA past-President Carolyn Robinowitz, M.D., who presented the award last week. “Disruptions in psychiatric medication coverage may lead to job loss or reduced productivity, hospitalization, and other costly and avoidable consequences.”

During the award ceremony, Dr. Robinowitz addressed Rep. Doggett about their shared views on health care reform and HR 3200, which the APA supports. Rep. Doggett was also a strong supporter of mental health parity legislation during the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, which passed the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act. The law ensures that patients receive mental health care coverage on par with that of other illnesses.

Established in 1986, the Jacob K. Javits Public Service Award honors the legacy of Sen. Jacob K. Javits from New York, who served for 24 years and used his position on the then-Labor and Public Welfare Committee to spearhead health legislation, achieving multiple successes on behalf of the mentally ill and on substance abuse issues. The Javits Award is given annually, alternately to a state public servant and a federal public servant.

Notable past recipients of this federal award include U.S. Sens. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., and Pete Domenici, R-N.M.

The American Psychiatric Association is the nation’s leading medical specialty society whose more than 38,000 physician members specialize in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and research of mental illnesses including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org) and [www.HealthyMinds.org](http://www.HealthyMinds.org).

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