

# NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Legislative district offices inundated with postcards as NCADD-NJ presses to close addiction treatment gap

TRENTON ... (June 10, 2009) – Thousands of postcards, many with personal appeals and signed by residents throughout New Jersey, will be hand-delivered to legislative district offices throughout New Jersey today as part of an effort to generate more revenue dedicated to treatment of addiction. The postcards, which are to be presented at the district offices by teams organized by National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-New Jersey (NCADD-NJ), describe the cost in lives and dollars of untreated addiction and call for a five-cent-a-gallon increase in the beer tax to fund treatment. The postcard effort, being distributed during today's Day of Advocacy, is part of a broader initiative, Close the Addiction Treatment Gap Campaign- New Jersey, which NCADD-NJ launched on May 13. The campaign stresses that "Addiction is a disease – Let's treat it that way."

The campaign, which is covering all 40 of the state's legislative districts in one day, features four messages on the post cards: Save Lives, Illness Healed, Families Restored, Hope Renewed. In addition to the cards, lawmakers will be presented with a Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap – New Jersey packet containing NCADD-NJ's new primer detailing the state's addiction treatment gap and the savings the state would see by providing more treatment. The packet also includes data about the alcohol tax, which has not been increased in the state since 1992. The proposal would raise \$7.5 million, which would be disbursed to counties for treatment through the Alcohol Education, Rehabilitation and Enforcement Fund dedicated to county addiction treatment services and appropriated \$11 million in alcoholic beverage excise taxes annually. The Fund's annual appropriation has also not been increased since 1992. Counties typically exhaust their treatment allocation by mid-year.

In addition to the postcard delivery to legislative offices, the push to close the state's addiction treatment gap by adding a nickel to the beer tax and having the new revenue dedicated to treatment was promoted on 101.5 fm radio and on the PolitickerNJ website. NCADD-NJ also sponsored the recent gubernatorial debate on 101.5 fm, which featured a minute spot discussing addiction as the number one health problem in the state. A banner on the PolitickerNJ website was devoted to the benefits of treating addiction.

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