

Interoffice Memo

Date : February 18, 2003
To : Marilyn Van Sant, and the NJAHU Board
From : Jack Kalosy, HIA , NJ State Legislative Chair
Telephone : 732-643-7340
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Subject : February Legislative Report

The South Jersey Chapter conducted an extremely informative and productive meeting on January 28th, 2003. The meeting was held at the Enterprise Center at BCC on Route 38 in Mount Laurel, NJ. They had a lively panel discussion with the following panelists: Sen. Matheussen, Sen. Adler, Ward Sanders (Executive Director of the SEH & IHC Boards), Don Sico (President of HealthSense), Russ Bent (NAHU lobbyist), Paul Bent (NAHU lobbyist), Jessica Waltman (NAHU Director of State Government Affairs), Elizabeth Litten, Esq. (attorney representing hospitals and HMO's) and Jack Kalosy (NJAHU Leg Chair). Our own Jim Stenger adroitly moderated the Panel.

During a discussion prior to the panel Senator Adler agreed to co-sponsor the High Risk Pool bill with Senator Matheussen. The bill is currently being drafted in OLS from the model language we gave the Senators. We expect the bill to be introduced by the end of February!

The next Legislative Management Team meeting will be held immediately following the Storming the Statehouse event.

Some important upcoming dates to remember:

February 21, 2003: Hotel Reservations Cut-Off Date for Cap Con
March 10th, 2003: Storming The Statehouse Down in Trenton
March 23-25, 2003: Capitol Conference

- The HIAPAC currently has a balance of \$4,335.00 as of February 18th, 2003. We received our largest individual pledge to date has come from Alex Petronella, a member of the North Jersey Chapter. We received a \$1,000 donation from the South Jersey Chapter's holiday party for the HIAPAC. The Northwest Chapter has generated over \$400 in donations from their February CE course/meeting. We have made \$300 in donations to NJ legislators to date. Our fundraising efforts have resulted in over \$4,600 in donations since the PAC's formation in the fall of 2002. We need approximately \$2,000 more in donations to reach our fiscal year goal of \$7,500!
- The Medical Malpractice bill, S2174, has been stalled in committee. One problematic feature of the bill would force health insurance companies, health plans and pharmacy benefit managers to pay \$5 per person they cover per year. The tax would be reduced to \$4 in the second year and \$3 in the third. The surcharge would be used to subsidize doctors' insurance premiums by establishing a new state fund financed by a new tax on health benefits.

- Governor McGreevey has “conditionally vetoed” bill number S571 (“New Jersey Health Care Consumer Information Act.”) sponsored by Senate Democratic President Richard Codey that would make medical, malpractice payment and discipline histories of the state’s doctors available on line. The Governor wants the Division of Consumer Affairs to have the final say on any data that is posted. No word on the bills status is available at the time of this report.
- At the South Jersey Chapters Panel discussion, both Senators John Adler and John Matheussen expressed support for amendments to the bill which would make it mandatory for the Legislature to follow recommendations made by the new commission, which as currently structured as an advisory committee. We have written to the assembly sponsors to request that a member of the NAHU be included on this important committee.
- Three bills that were recently introduced are:
 - S-2331 Sweeney (D-3); Furnari (D-36) +3 – If passed this bill will Establish New Jersey Rx Program to reduce prescription drug prices. (2002:A-3289)
 - S-2325 Kean, T. (R-21); Kavanaugh (R-16)- "New Jersey Medical Care Availability and Patient Protection Act of 2003." (2002:A-3170)
 - A-3354 Impreveduto (D-32); Moran (R-9)- Requires HMOs that contract with DHS to reimburse hospitals for emergency services based on cost of those services.
- The Capitol Conference appointment calendar is nearly completed thanks to Dave Mordo’s hard work and dogged determination. We are, however, looking to fill three remaining appointments:

Senator Lautenberg

Congressman LoBiondo

Congressman Menendez

Please contact Dave if you can commit to making any of these remaining appointments.

- We are in the process of reaching out to Senator Codey to suggest that last sessions bill, S207 (introduced and passed in 2001- 2002 session), that expanded the types of coverage that constitute valid waivers be extended to include the following additional waivers; Medicaid & NJ Family Care.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jack Kalosy

NJ State Legislative Chair