

2008 CAPITOL CONFERENCE RE-CAP

The NAHU Capitol Conference took place on February 4th – 6th at the JW Marriott in Washington D.C. The NJ delegation consisted of 22 volunteers comprised of Brokers, General Agents and Carriers.

The Monday morning opening session featured a fascinating opening Ronald Reagan piece on socialized medicine. The relevance of that speech today which took place 40 years ago was very evident to those assembled. The deputy secretary of HHS, Dr. Tevi Troy presented an update and overview of the Bush Administration's priorities for 2008. There was also a presentation of the effective of wellness programs as to tool to reduce costs.

Afternoon breakout sessions consisted on 1 hour seminars on a variety of topics ranging from NAHU's Healthy Access Plan to vital information concerning Connectors and /or Exchanges.

Tuesday morning's session stated with Grace-Marie Turner of the Galen Institute who discussed the healthcare plans of the various presidential candidates.

Former Congresswoman Nancy Johnson introduced all of us to the "*Health IT Now Coalition*" a group whose goal it is to educate doctors and organizations like our about the importance of Health Information Technology as it relates to patient care and awareness.

The main thrust of our visit each year is to get the opportunity to go to Capitol Hill and meet with our NJ delegation of legislators. Because it was "Super Tuesday", many of the congressmen were not in town but we did secure appointments with all of their legislative aides during the Tuesday and Wednesday visits. Our discussions focused on a few key issues which included Mental Health Parity, FSA rollover legislation, Health Information Technology, individual and employer mandates and LTC tax credits.

Wednesday's general session included visits from Congressmen Mike Rogers, Louis Gohmert, Tim Murphy and John Shimkus who spoke about various aspects of the state of health care in the United States.

All of the presentations from the conference can be viewed by logging on to www.nahu.org

We hope to see more of you down in Washington D.C. in 2009.