

**Report to the Leadership Assembly
CHEST 2009
Government Relations Committee (GRC)**

GRC Mission:

To develop and advocate policy positions, educate the membership, make recommendations to the Board of Regents on advocacy initiatives addressing legislative and regulatory issues that impact our members, and to be trusted advisors to legislators and regulators during their decision-making process.

GRC Vision:

To provide an influential voice in the United States Congress and federal agencies on issues affecting the practice of chest medicine.

GRC Is Charged with:

- Identifying legislative and regulatory issues important to ACCP members' ability to care for their patients;
- Prioritizing, developing, and implementing advocacy plans;
- Making recommendations to the appropriate ACCP committee(s) or NetWork(s) for action;
- Collaborating with ACCP committee(s), NetWork(s), The CHEST Foundation and other College divisions on advocacy and practice issues;
- Providing ongoing advocacy education to ACCP members;
- Communicating recommendations and actions to appropriate audiences including members of Congress, as well as the medical community;
- Assisting ACCP Governors, and their constituencies, in building strong relationships with key members of Congress.

Positions developed by the Committee are first brought to the appropriate ACCP stakeholders for comment and input, refined, and then brought to the Board of Regents for endorsement as official positions of the ACCP. The Committee keeps the Board of Regents advised of its activities, and of all other matters under its consideration. The Committee also solicits the views of the membership at large through regular communication with the NetWorks, the US/Canadian Council of Governors, through the ACCP grassroots network, and when appropriate with other partner societies.

The GRC also provides ACCP members an opportunity to participate in the ACCP Capitol Hill Caucus, an education and advocacy forum held annually in Washington DC, during the Spring legislative session.

The scope of policy issues considered by the GRC includes, but is not limited to healthcare workforce issues; tobacco/antismoking issues and other issues dealing with the prevention of lung and heart disease; biomedical research; health care reform, and Medicare.

The 2008-2009 GRC:

Irwin M. Berlin, MD, FCCP, Chair
Paul D. Banick, MD, PhD, MBA
FCCP, Immediate Past Chair
Rob Aranson, MD, FCCP
Sidney S. Braman, MD, FCCP
W. Brendle Glomb, MD, FCCP
Diane C. Lim, MD, FCCP
James P. Osmanski II, DO, FCCP
Daniel T. Ouellette, MD, FCCP
Susan K. Pingleton, MD, FCCP
Rebecca Shriver, MD, FCCP
Pascal Udekwu, MD, FCCP
Steven Zimmet, MD, FCCP

Liaisons:

John Buckley, MD, FCCP President,
Association of Pulmonary and

Critical Care Medicine Program
Directors
Eric Yaeger, MD, FCCP, National
Association for Medical Direction of
Respiratory Care
William Goodman, MD, FCCP
Counsel of US/Canadian Governors
Michael Nelson, MD, FCCP, Chair
Practice Management Committee

ACCP Staff:

Lynne Marcus, VP Health Affairs
Marla Brichta, Asst VP Health Affairs
Priyal Patel, Program Coordinator
Stacy Seiden, Senior Advocacy
Strategist
Terri Berman, Administrative Asst.,
Health Affairs

ACCP Grassroots Advocacy by the numbers:

- ACCP was instrumental in getting 2 bills re-introduced in the 111th Congress in the Spring of 2009– HR 1581 and S 1020 – *The Patient Focused Critical Care Enhancement Act*.
- 25 informational emails, including 10 ACCP Advocacy e-Updates, sent to 48,632,491 recipients.
- 9 Action Alerts generating 1465 messages to Congress sent by 539 activists.
- Messages sent from 47 states as well as Puerto Rico. The most active state, New York, sent 231 advocacy messages to Congress.
- The ACCP Legislative Action Center had 30,978 page views.
- ACCP members hosted 2 site visits, met with staff from 2 District, and attended 2 congressional town hall meetings.
- 523 members participated in an ACCP survey eliciting their opinions on the current health care reform agenda
- GRC held 9 monthly conference calls, plus a weekly call with the Chair, Immediate Past Chair, Legislative Counsel and staff

Issues acted upon and/or followed this year included:

- Re-introduction of *The Patient Focused Critical Care Enhancement Act* (HR 1581) by Rep. Janice Schakowsky (D- IL 9) and Eric Cantor (R-VA-7) in March 2009 – Senate version (S 1020) introduced in April 2009 by Senators Whitehouse (D-RI) and Crapo (R- ID)
- Successfully worked with the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids for passage of

The Family Smoking Prevention and Control Act of 2009 (HR 1256 and S 982). Irwin Berlin, MD, FCCP, Chair of GRC was invited to attend the signing ceremony when President Obama signed *The Family Smoking Prevention and Control Act of 2009* into law.

- Worked to change the language in HR 855/S 616, *Enhancing Safety in Medicine Utilizing Leading Advanced Simulation Technologies to Improve Outcomes Now Act of 2009*, introduced by Rep. Patrick Kennedy and Rep. Randy Forbes to change the definition of eligible entity to include national medical specialty societies offering simulation training courses accredited by ACCME, to allow ACCP to participate in any legislative outcomes.
- Under ACCP Board direction, worked with Dr. Richard Wunderink to establish the Hospital Acquired Infection Collaborative comprised of members from ACCP, ATS, NAMDRG, AACN, SCCM to develop recommendations for the US Department of Health & Human Services on issues surrounding their Action Plan to Prevent Healthcare-Associated Infections.
- Collaborated with ATS and NAMDRG to develop a position on Rep. Ross legislation, *The Medicare Home Oxygen Therapy Act of 2009*, so that it would better support the needs of our members' patients.
- Worked with the ACCP Taskforce on Mass Critical Care and the ACCP Critical Care Institute to develop a white paper for distribution to Congressional staff prior to scheduling an education opportunity for Congressional staff on the importance and value of the CHEST Supplement *Definitive Care for the Critically Ill During a Disaster*.
- Supported HR1077 / S 343 the Medicare Respiratory therapy Initiative Act of 2009 in coalition with AARC.
- Advocated for FY 2010 Budget – Funding for CDC Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion for COPD.
- Advocated for change in the Sustained Growth Rate formula in support of Medicare reimbursement for physician services.

Other GRC Activities:

- Twenty-two ACCP Governors attended the 16th Capitol Hill Caucus in March 2009 along with 57 additional attendees to address issues that included the critical care workforce shortage, and FDA regulation of tobacco. Attendees made over 100 visits to members of Congress, which supported passage of the *The Family Smoking Prevention and Control Act of 2009*.
- Initiated the application for CME for the 2010 Pre-Caucus Advocacy Podcast.

- Initiated planning for a late afternoon reception on Capitol Hill for Congressional staff and Legislators to be held during the 2010 Caucus.
- Continued our working relationship with Holland and Knight (H&K), our Washington DC Legislative Consultants.
- Participated in the ACCP Revenue Retreat and successfully presented the “Case for Washington Representation and Collaboration – A Non-Revenue Generating Project”.
- Signed on to 10 coalition letters, over 10 months, in collaboration with the AMA, Tobacco Free Kids, ATS, NAMDRRC, AAMC, ALA, and National Home Oxygen Patients Association.
- The Chair of GRC is liaison to PMC, which helps in:
 - communicating regulatory issues to the GRC and
 - communicating legislative issues back to PMC.
- Helped to organize a successful site visit by Representative Janice Schakowsky (D-IL-9) to Evanston Hospital, part of NorthShore University HealthSystem, in Evanston, Illinois. As part of her visit, the Congresswoman saw The CHEST Foundation's Critical Care Family Assistance Program (CCFAP) in action, spent time with the ICU staff involved with the CCFAP on a daily basis, and came away with an understanding of the tremendous value this program could bring to other ICUs across the United States.
- Have expanded the *1st at Home Program* to all 50 states that involve the ACCP Governors to encourage growth in the ACCP grassroots advocates program. The program also encourages each ACCP Governor to begin to establish a relationship with their Congressional representatives.
 - Governors have sent letters to their state members encouraging grassroots participation.
 - Governors sent welcome letters to new Hill staff members introducing ACCP as a trusted resource.
 - All ACCP Governors were notified when townhall meetings were scheduled in their districts and asked to attend.
- In May, the role of the US/Canadian Governors was formally changed to include a primary focus for advocacy and its importance as a tool in educating decision makers both in the United States and Canada.
 - The ACCP US/Canadian Council of Governors would take on a new focus on advocacy with clear roles and responsibilities delineated. The Governors’ Handbook would be redrafted to reflect these changes.

- Approval of membership applications, and recruitment of new ACCP members would continue to be a small part of their job description.
 - The function of this Council would be to support legislative and regulatory advocacy issues approved by the Board of Regents. The Council would also participate in GRC and PMC meetings, activities, and conference calls when appropriate. The Council would work closely with both committees.
 - Governors would be asked to also recruit participants for the ACCP 1st At Home Advocacy Program, and to actively participate in the legislative and regulatory process when appropriate.
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- In May, an email from Loren Greenway, PhD, FCCP, Chair, and William Goodman, MD, FCCP Vice Chair of the US/Canadian Council of Governors, was sent to all current and incoming Governors asking if they were still interested in being considered for ACCP Governor. 100% said that they remained interested.
 - Two Advocate of the Year Awards will again be given at CHEST 2009 during the ACCP US/Canadian Governor meeting recognizing ACCP Grassroots advocates who have taken exceptional measures to advance ACCP's public policy agenda through legislative and/or regulatory advocacy and grassroots activism.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Irwin Berlin".

Irwin Berlin, MD FCCP
Chair, ACCP Government Relations Committee