



## The Insider

*A monthly newsletter providing the inside scoop on campaigns and politics, policy developments, fundraising, and even humor, published exclusively for contributors to the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons Political Action Committee (OMSPAC).*

## February 2007

### 2007 Day on the Hill

AAOMS's 7<sup>th</sup> annual Day on the Hill program will take place at the Fairmont Hotel in Washington, D.C on Wednesday, April 18, 2007. Day on the Hill is a powerful advocacy tool that compliments OMSPAC's efforts to advance the specialty's interests and we highly encourage your attendance. The abbreviated schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	5:30pm	Reception
	6:30pm	Dinner/Keynote speaker - Mort Kondracke, Political pundit, FOX News, Editor of Roll Call and co-host of the Beltway Boys.
Wednesday, April 18 <sup>th</sup>	6:30am	Breakfast
	7am – 8:30am	Morning program featuring influential members of Congress
	8:30am	Participants go to Capitol Hill to meet with their Members of Congress ( <i>Participants book own congressional appointments and may depart for home anytime after their appointments are completed</i> )
	11:30 am - 3 pm	Optional Debriefing at the Fairmont Hotel ( <i>Snack will be available</i> )

There is no registration fee to attend this meeting. Attendees are responsible for their own travel and lodging costs. To register for or obtain more information on this meeting, please contact Cally Eckles at 800/822-6637 or [ceckles@aaoms.org](mailto:ceckles@aaoms.org).

### Veteran Lawmaker Norwood Passes Away At His Home In Georgia

Rep. Charlie Norwood (R-Ga.-10) passed away last week at his home in Augusta, Ga. Norwood, 65, left Washington one week prior to receive hospice care, forgoing further treatment for lung cancer that had spread to his liver. At the time, spokesman John Stone said Norwood had decided to be with his family and "let the Lord decide what to do." The seven-term lawmaker received a lung transplant in 2004 as part of his treatment for idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, a chronic lung disease; he later developed cancer. Majority Leader, Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.-5), said Norwood was willing to work across party lines in search of compromise. His constituents "have lost an honest, hard-working gentleman of conscience who represented them well," Hoyer said. Norwood's colleagues observed a moment of silence on the House floor when his death was announced. Norwood, a former dentist, was first elected in 1994. Congressman Norwood was AAOMS's 2002 Legislator of the Year. – *portions from CongressDailyPM, February 13, 2007*

### **Sen. Obama Quits Smoking**

Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) resolved to quit his cigarette habit over the winter holidays, just weeks before his expected presidential campaign would make photographers and reporters an even more regular part of his life. He said in an interview that, although he has never been a heavy smoker, he has quit for periods over the last several years, but then slipped back into the habit. Being on the cusp of a potential presidential bid seemed the right time to quit for good, he said. The incentive to quit is great for any office seeker, as increasingly negative attitudes about smoking translate into political pressure not to do it - or at least not to be caught doing it. At a time when most willing public figures also are expected to serve as role models, those with unhealthy habits face intense pressure to leave them behind. Sen. Obama has said he never smoked more than 10 cigarettes a day, and usually only four or five. He said the number usually went up when he was either writing or campaigning. – *from the Chicago Tribune, February 6, 2007*

### **Nearly Half of House Freshmen Report Campaign Debt**

Newly filed disclosure reports show nearly half of the 55-member freshman class ended 2006 with at least a modest debt and new Republicans have some of the largest bills to pay off. Among the 13 new Republican members, six had some debt and four owed more than \$100,000. Rep. Vern Buchanan (R-Fla.-13), whose election is still disputed by his Democratic opponent, topped the debt list with \$1.6 million, including \$1.1 million in vendor debt and a \$500,000 personal loan. Rep. Dean Heller (R-Nev.-2) reported owing \$388,000, mostly in vendor debt, while Rep. Bill Sali (R-Idaho-1) owed \$245,000 to vendors. Rep. David Davis (R-Tenn.-1) has \$238,000 in debt, although more than half that amount is personal loans. On the positive side, Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.-22) showed a balance of \$470,000 in his account, while Reps. Peter Roskam (R-Ill.-6) and Mary Fallin (R-Okla.-5) each had at least \$100,000 in their treasure chests. Most Democratic freshmen appear well-positioned to put their debts behind them and restock their campaigns for the new election cycle, or at least have the luxury of paying back personal loans on their own schedule. Of the 42 Democratic freshmen, 20 reported a net debt and nine owed \$100,000 or more. Rep. John Yarmuth (D-Ky.-3) topped the Democrat list with \$708,000 in personal loans left over from his victory over former GOP Rep. Anne Northup. Rep. Tim Mahoney (D-Fla.-16) took second place with \$637,000 in debt, about two-thirds of it in personal loans, followed by Rep. Steve Kagen (D-Wis.-8) who had \$481,000 in loans from himself. Reps. Nancy Boyda (D-Kan.-2) and Charlie Wilson (D-Ohio-6) each reported self-financed debt of over \$200,000. Reps. Paul Hodes (D-N.H.-2) and Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii-2) each reported debts of over \$100,000. Eight Democratic freshmen reported \$100,000 or more in cash on hand. Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.-AL) led with \$328,000 in his account, while Reps. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa-1) and Joe Sestak (D-Pa.-7) each had cash reserves topping \$200,000. Other members reporting a surplus included Reps. Nick Lampson, (D-Texas-22), Cirro Rodriguez (D-Texas-23), Kathy Castor (D-Fla.-11), Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.-9) and Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.-8). – *from CongressDailyPM, February 2, 2007*

### **Surviving Hurricane Emanuel**

After the drubbing they took at the hands of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in November, you would think Republicans wouldn't be feeling so charitable toward former DCCC Chairman Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill.-5). But, Rep. Heather Wilson (R-N.M.-1) — one of the few GOP incumbents who held onto her seat despite an onslaught from the DCCC — wanted to show there are no hard feelings toward Emanuel, who now serves as Democratic Caucus Chairman. It seems that after Election Day, Emanuel went over to Wilson on the House floor to congratulate her on her victory. Wilson told Emanuel she had shirts made for her campaign staff that said, "I Survived Hurricane Emanuel November 7, 2006." Emanuel said he'd like to get one of those shirts, so he trucked over to Wilson's office in the Cannon House Office Building and picked one up. While he was there, aides said, Emanuel apologized to Wilson's staff for making their lives miserable, prompting some laughter. He then said, "I'm really looking forward to wearing this at the House gym tomorrow morning." – *from Roll Call January 31, 2007*

### **House and Senate Rule Changes**

The following changes were made to Congressional Ethics Rules in the early days of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress:

**House** – Members of the House of Representatives may not accept gifts from lobbyists or those who employ lobbyists. This does not apply to campaign contributions, because campaign finance laws are separate from House rules. Gifts that remain acceptable and are exceptions to the new rule include: lawful political contributions, gifts given on the basis of personal friendship (one determination on “personal friendship” is based on “whether the donor sought a tax deduction or business reimbursement for it”), gifts from family members and tickets to widely attended events or receptions. Free travel will no longer be accepted from organizations that retain or employ lobbyists, with the exception of colleges and universities and for certain one-day trips. Members are now prohibited from accepting travel expenses if a lobbyist planned, organized, financed or will be involved in the trip in any way. Before taking a reimbursed trip, the member must present, to the House Ethics Committee, certification from the entity paying for the trip that no lobbyist was or will be involved in the trip. Corporate jets may no longer be used for House member travel. Members and employees of the House will now be required to attend ethics training on an annual basis. Members are prohibited from using political action or threatening retaliation against private firms that hire employees who do not belong to the Members’ political party. Earmarks cannot be traded for votes and Members must disclose their requests.

**Senate** – All Earmarks must include the identity of the member who proposed it and a full description of their purpose must be available to all members and the general public. Senators may not accept gifts, travel, or lodging of any kind that is paid for by registered lobbyists or foreign agents. Lobbyists may not host lavish parties at national conventions. Members are now prohibited from accepting travel expenses if a lobbyist planned, organized, financed or will be involved in the trip in any way. Before taking a reimbursed trip, the member must present to the Ethics Committee certification from the entity paying for the trip that no lobbyist was or will be involved in the trip. Members will be required to pay the full charter rates on corporate jets and may not “hitch” a ride. Registered lobbyists must report on their lobbying activities quarterly as opposed to semiannually. Reports will include the disclosure of funds that lobbyists donate to candidates personally, as well as funds raised from clients which are then “bundled” and given to politicians as larger contributions. Senators are prohibited from negotiating or arranging prospective employment until after the election of their successor, unless public disclosure of negotiations and arrangements are made available. If a member is interested in lobbying after their tenure in office, they must now wait two years before engaging in lobbying activities. A member’s staff is prohibited from having any official contact with the Member’s spouse or his or her immediate family if that individual is a registered lobbyist or employed by a registered lobbyist. A lobbyist may not hire the spouse of a sitting member. Ethics training is mandatory for the Senate. *–from the Public Affairs Council*

**Now You Can Give More to Politicians**

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) has announced revised contribution limits that have been indexed for inflation and are effective for the 2007-2008 elections for President, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House of Representatives. During the current election cycle, individuals may contribute up to \$2,300 per election to Federal candidates, up to \$28,500 per year to national party committees, and a combined total of up to \$108,200 during the two year period to all Federal campaigns, parties, and other political committees. Below is a breakdown for all contribution levels:

**FEC Contribution Limits for 2007-2008**

	To each candidate or candidate committee per election	To national party committee per calendar year	To state, district & local party committee per calendar year	To any other political committee per calendar year	Special Limits
<b>Individual may contribute</b>	\$2,300	\$28,500*	\$10,000 (combined limit)	\$5,000	\$108,200* overall biennial limit: • \$42,700*

					to all candidates • \$65,500* to all PACs and parties
<b>National Party Committee may contribute</b>	\$5,000	No limit	No limit	\$5,000	\$39,900* to Senate candidate per campaign
<b>State, District &amp; Local Party Committee May contribute</b>	\$5,000 (combined limit)	No limit	No limit	\$5,000 (Combined limit)	No limit
<b>PAC (multi-candidate) may contribute</b>	\$5,000	\$15,000	\$5,000 (combined limit)	\$5,000	No limit
<b>PAC (not multi-candidate) may contribute</b>	\$2,300*	\$28,500*	\$10,000 (combined limit)	\$5,000	No limit
<b>Candidate Committee may contribute</b>	\$2,000	No limit	No limit	\$5,000	No limit

\*These contribution limits are increased for inflation in odd-numbered years.

–from *Political MoneyLine*, January 31, 2007 and FEC website

## **NEW SECTION! – HEALTH RELATED ITEMS OF INTEREST**

### **American Medical Association Adjusts Strategy on Lobbying for Medical Malpractice Legislation**

Kaiser Daily Health Report

[February 01, 2007]

Physician lobbyists are redirecting their focus on medical malpractice legislation this year as they face a new Democratic Congress, which is unlikely to pass any bill that would cap noneconomic damages in malpractice lawsuits, *The Hill* reports. Democratic lawmakers historically have supported trial lawyers and public interest groups that oppose limits on noneconomic damages. Democrats also say the court system is the only institution that can fairly moderate between private citizens and moneyed interests, according to *The Hill*. The Democratic majority "has forced [physician lobbyists] to adjust their strategies not only in dealing with Congress, but also in responding to their members and clients," *The Hill* reports. Last year, the American Medical Association and other groups, such as the Health Coalition on Liability and Access, ran advertising campaigns supporting Republicans' malpractice bills in the home districts and states of key lawmakers. While federal tort reform efforts failed, "many of the proponents' aims were met" by state lawmakers and health insurers that "eliminate[d] some controversial practices," *The Hill* reports. A physician lobbyist said that a growing number of states have begun to address medical malpractice issues and that those actions have been spurred by efforts at the federal level. Although there might be "some form of legislative activity" on medical malpractice insurance or lawsuits this year, AMA has indicated that it will place more focus on issues supported by Democrats, such as expanding

health coverage to the uninsured and preventing a 10% reduction in Medicare payments to physicians, according to The Hill (Young, The Hill, 2/1).

### **Bipartisan Group of 10 Senators Offers President Bush a Blueprint for Increasing Health Care Coverage, White House Agrees to Work with Lawmakers**

Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report  
[Feb 14, 2007]

A bipartisan group of senators on Tuesday asked President Bush to work with them on a proposal to expand health insurance to all U.S. residents, the *AP/San Francisco Chronicle* reports. According to the *AP/Chronicle*, Bush, "hoping to generate some positive momentum" for his domestic agenda, has accepted the offer." In a letter to Bush, Senators Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Kent Conrad (D-N.D.), Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), Herb Kohl (D-Wis.), Ken Salazar (D-Colo.), Jim DeMint (R-S.C.), Robert Bennett (R-Utah), Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and John Thune (R-S.D.) wrote that they have developed a broad outline for a proposal that would seek to expand affordable health insurance to all residents and to protect public programs such as Medicare and Medicaid. The proposal also would seek to revise federal tax rules for health insurance because the rules favor higher-income residents and promote inefficiency, Wyden said. However, he said the Senators have not endorsed the health insurance proposal that Bush announced last month in his State of the Union address (Freking, *AP/San Francisco Chronicle*, 2/13). The senators wrote, "Further delay is unacceptable as costs continue to skyrocket, our population ages and chronic illness increases. In addition, our businesses are at a severe disadvantage when their competitors in the global market get health care for 'free.'" Allan Hubbard, director of the *National Economic Council*, said, "We agree with these senators -- we want to fix health care now" (*Reuters/Washington Post*, 2/13). White House spokesperson Tony Fratto said that Bush hopes to discuss the proposal with the senators in the near future (*AP/San Francisco Chronicle*, 2/13).

### **Bush FY 2008 Budget Proposal Includes \$101.5B in Medicare, Medicaid Savings**

Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report  
[Feb 05, 2007]

President Bush on Monday released a \$2.8 trillion fiscal year 2008 budget proposal that includes \$101.5 billion in savings from Medicare and Medicaid over five years, the *New York Times* reports. The budget includes more than \$78.6 billion in Medicare and Medicaid savings, and, according to the *New York Times*, it also includes revisions to federal regulations for an additional \$22.9 billion in savings from the two programs. The proposal would "eliminate annual indexing on income thresholds" to require a larger number of higher-income Medicare beneficiaries to pay increased premiums in future years (Pear, *New York Times*, 2/4). Currently, individual Medicare beneficiaries with annual incomes that exceed \$80,000 and married couples with annual incomes that exceed \$160,000 pay increased premiums (Crutsinger, *AP/Akron Beacon Journal*, 2/5). In addition, the proposal would implement a premium based on income in the Medicare prescription drug benefit. The two provisions would result in an estimated \$10.2 billion in Medicare savings over five years. Bush "contends that he can make the rule changes without any action by Congress," but "Congress could try to block some or all of the changes," the Times reports. The proposal also would make permanent reductions in Medicare reimbursements to health care providers. The proposal would include \$25.7 billion in Medicaid savings over five years, \$12.7 billion of which would result from revisions to federal regulations. Bush said, "Our budget reduces Medicare's average annual growth rate over five years to 5.6% from 6.5%" and reduces the average annual Medicaid growth rate to 7.1% from 7.3%.

*Other Health Programs-* The proposal would provide \$5.4 billion to fund SCHIP in FY 2008, a 4% decrease from FY 2007. In addition, the proposal includes an "additional allotment" of \$5 billion for SCHIP over five years -- less than half of the amount required to maintain coverage for current beneficiaries. Bush has said that he seeks to return to the "original objective" of SCHIP: to provide health insurance for children in families with annual incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level. Budget documents "note that 16 states cover children above that level, and 'one state, New Jersey, covers children up to 350% of the federal poverty level,'" the Times reports. The proposal would provide \$28.9

billion to fund biomedical research in FY 2008, an increase of less than 1% from FY 2007. Under the proposal, funds for the National Cancer Institute would decrease by \$9 million to \$4.8 billion in FY 2008. The proposal also would establish a new \$17 million program to promote "healthy behavior" among adolescents. However, the proposal "asks Congress to eliminate the preventive health services block grant, which provides \$99 million a year to help states prevent obesity and other chronic conditions," the *New York Times* reports (New York Times, 2/4).

### **Campaign Will Seek To Limit Physicians' Contact with Pharmaceutical Companies**

Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report  
[Feb 12, 2007]

The consumer advocacy group, Community Catalysts, and the Institute on Medicine as a Profession, a research group at Columbia University, on Tuesday plan to launch a campaign that will seek to limit the number of meals and other gifts that physicians accept from pharmaceutical companies, the *New York Times* reports. The campaign, called the Prescription Project, will recommend limits on contact between physicians and pharmaceutical companies and will encourage physicians to base their medication prescribing decisions on medical evidence rather than on marketing. The campaign, funded by a \$6 million grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, resulted from of a *Journal of the American Medical Association* article published in January 2006 that recommended limits on contact between physicians and pharmaceutical companies at academic medical centers nationwide. Jim O'Hara, managing director of policy initiatives at Pew, said, "If you've been in the waiting room when these Chinese lunches are taken into the back office, it may raise the question whether the decisions are based on the best scientific evidence about medication or whether or not those Sichuan Shrimp have something to do with the prescribing patterns." David Rothman, author of the *JAMA* article and president of the institute, said, "Gifts bring with them the felt need to reciprocate" (Saul, *New York Times*, 2/12).

### **Final Word**

"When the red light goes on, there is a trap door underneath your seat through which you will fall."

-- Rep. Robert Andrews (D-N.J.-1) instructing witnesses on the time lights during the first hearing of his new Education and Labor Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee. -- from *CongressDailyPM*, February 8, 2007