



# AMA Alliance Advocacy Connection

September 2008

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## Resources

[National Conference of State Legislatures](#)

[A Guide to Communicating With Members of Congress](#)

Greetings!

Welcome to the AMA Alliance Advocacy Connection, quarterly electronic newsletter for Alliance members, designed to keep you informed of reported state legislative actions that may have an impact or future impact on the medical practice in your area.

For details on specific legislative activity or help in your state or county, send an e-mail to [amaa@ama-assn.org](mailto:amaa@ama-assn.org). A member of the Legislation Committee will contact you to hear your concern or follow-up your interest. To suggest a story for this newsletter, please e-mail [nancy.battaglia@ama-assn.org](mailto:nancy.battaglia@ama-assn.org).

Please share this e-newsletter with other Alliance members and non-members. For more information on Alliance activities, visit the [AMA Alliance](#) website. Please click here for a special edition [AMA Advocacy Update](#).

## The Belle Chenault Award for Political Participation

The Belle Chenault Award For Political Participation recognizes an AMA Alliance member for outstanding accomplishment through volunteer activities in a political campaign or state ballot initiative. If the Alliance member is a political candidate, the individual may not be nominated for work on their own campaign's behalf. The award honors one national winner every other year. The Board of Directors of the American Medical Association Political Action Committee (AMPAC), which makes the final determination of the winner, requires nominations to meet these conditions:

- The activity for which an Alliance member is being nominated must have occurred during the last election cycle, during the years 2007 and 2008. The activity may relate to a campaign for public office and/or a ballot initiative or referendum. Initiatives/ballot referenda should be directly related to organized medicine's agenda.
- Nominees must be a member of AMPAC and a member of the AMA Alliance during both years of the election cycle (2007 and 2008) for which they are nominated. Only nominees that meet these criteria will be considered qualified and forwarded to, and considered by, the AMPAC Board of Directors.
- The Board of Directors of the respective state PAC must first nominate the Alliance member for the award. There can only be one nomination per state.

[Click here](#) to read the rest of the Belle Chenault guidelines.

Please direct any questions to the Political Education Programs Manager at:

Belle Chenault Award  
25 Massachusetts Ave, N.W., Suite 600

## Stay Up to Date with the Advocacy Update!

Copies of the AMA's Advocacy Update are posted on the AMA web page at

Please go to this [link](#) for an abundance of resources.

### Quick Links

[AMA Alliance Website](#)

[Alliance Products](#)

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## 2008-09 Legislation Committee Members/State Assignments

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State assignments: Idaho,  
Indiana, Kansas, Nevada, New  
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**Julie Newman**  
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State assignments: Connecticut,  
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Iowa, Kentucky, Pennsylvania,  
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## Registration for AMPAC 2009 Political Education Programs

On February 13-15, 2009, AMPAC (the AMA's Political Action Committee) will host the annual Candidate Workshop in Pentagon City, Virginia. The Workshop is designed for AMA members and their spouses who are considering a run for public office, and includes training on campaign strategy and media advertising, as well as hands-on sessions in public speaking and fundraising. Phil Roe, MD, last week's upset winner of the Republican primary election in Tennessee's 1st Congressional District, attended the 2008 Candidate Workshop.

AMPAC will conduct its annual Campaign School April 15-19, 2009, also in Pentagon City, for AMA members who wish to become involved in the political process as advocates and volunteers for medicine-friendly candidates. The School is organized around a simulated congressional campaign, where participants are put on campaign "staff" teams and attend daily lectures on campaign strategy, media advertising and political fundraising. Each team participates in nightly exercises such as creating a campaign strategy, taping a radio commercial, and writing a political fundraising letter.

For both programs, all costs for AMA members, except transportation to the Washington, DC metro area, are borne by AMPAC. Alliance members married to an AMA member are also eligible to attend the AMPAC Workshop and school, all expenses paid. For more information on these programs or an application, please contact Jim Wilson, Political Education Programs Manager, at 202-789-7465 or [jim.wilson@ama-assn.org](mailto:jim.wilson@ama-assn.org).

## Scope of Practice

**Submitted By: Mary Shuman, AMA Alliance Legislation Committee Chair**

Through the Scope of Practice Partnership (SOPP), the AMA is leading the effort to contest scope-of-practice expansions that threaten patient safety, serving as a watchdog of legislative, regulatory, and/or legal efforts that seek to expand the scope of practice of non-providers into the practice of medicine. The SOPP has created task forces to address issues such as licensure of naturopaths, doctor of nursing practice programs, and truth-in-advertising state pilots in an effort to counteract the more than 200 scope-of-practice bills/regulations tracked by the AMA's Advocacy Resource Center.

The SOPP is undertaking a project to build a national case for the importance of truth-in-advertising by health care providers. The need for this campaign is supported by a 2005 Coalition for Healthcare Accountability Responsibility and Transparency (CHART) survey that found the following:

- 72 percent believe a podiatrist is a medical doctor
- 70 percent believe an optometrist is a medical doctor
- 59 percent believe a psychologist is a medical doctor
- 56 percent believe a chiropractor is a medical doctor
- 33 percent believe a dental assistant is a medical doctor

As of June 2008, the SOPP has contracted with Sonnenschein Nath and Rosenthal to complete this campaign. Next steps include (1) conducting background research on the pervasiveness of the problem; (2) creating and implementing a survey designed to measure consumer confusion about health care professionals' titles, education, etcetera; (3) completing extensive documentation of the problem; (4) creating an advocacy toolkit

Arkansas, California, Colorado, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Vermont and Wyoming

**Rosemary Xavier**

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State assignments: District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico and Wisconsin

## Note For Winter Session/NAC Attendees

If you are planning on attending the Leadership Development Conference - Winter Session/NAC in Washington, DC, March 9-11, 2009 and want to take a tour of the White House, you must contact your Senator or Congressperson at least 3-6 months in advance to secure tickets. These are hot items and are nearly impossible to get at the last minute. Visit your representatives' websites or call their Washington DC offices for more information and to arrange your tour.

detailing this deceptive advertising; and (5) creating a formal presentation that can be used by SOPP members in their advocacy efforts.

*This article is a combination of AMA Advocacy Resource Center--Board of Trustees Report 28-A-07-page 5 and COL Report September 2008, Michelle Gupta, JD, Legislative Attorney.*

## Center's Efforts Add Momentum to Volunteer Fuel Relief Legislation

**Submitted By: Julie Newman, AMA Legislation Committee Member**

With the rising cost of gas, many nonprofits are struggling to find volunteers willing to drive their cars to help provide essential services. Currently, if you itemize your deductions on your federal tax return, you can deduct 58.5 cents/mile you drive for business purposes, but you can only deduct 14 cents/mile when you drive as a volunteer. Volunteers also must pay taxes on any driving reimbursement over 14 cents/mile.

Over the past few months, Congress has introduced several bills to provide tax relief for nonprofit volunteers. The best of these proposals, H.R. 2020, would increase the volunteer mileage rate to the current business rate. Other bills would provide less relief to volunteers by raising the nonprofit mileage rate to a fixed amount that would still be lower than the business rate. As a result of the Center's advocacy, Rep. Brad Miller recently joined Reps. Bob Etheridge, David Price, and Heath Shuler as a co-sponsor of H.R. 2020.

Have you signed up for the new AMA Alliance Hertz #1 Club Gold - \$60 fee WAIVED for Alliance members? [Click here](#) to sign up now!

## Florida's Vote and Vax Program

**Submitted By: Rosemary Xavier, AMA Alliance Legislation Committee Member**

Florida's Department of Health, Bureau of Immunization announced that Florida's 2008 Vote & Vax (Vaccinate) adult flu and pneumococcal immunization campaign will be held in conjunction with general elections in November. Flu season is generally November through March. In 2002, influenza and pneumonia together were the eighth leading cause of death in Florida killing over 3,000 individuals. A pneumococcal shot and an annual flu shot could prevent complications and death associated with pneumonia and the flu. Vote & Vax works with local public health providers to assist them in launching vaccination clinics at polling places across the state. This is strictly a voluntary effort that any county may elect to initiate. Vote & Vax has helped provide thousands of influenza vaccinations to at-risk Americans since its first multi-state program in 2004. The program has held many successful clinics at polling sites in 2006, immunizing large numbers of Americans who would have not otherwise been reached. Election supervisors statewide are encouraged to embrace this concept as endorsed by the executive Board of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections. The minimum requirements for this campaign outreach include being at least 100 feet from the polling room, not placing any signs at the polling place, vaccinations to be administered after the participant votes, and county health departments coordinating with individual counties and their supervisors of election. For more information visit the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Vote & Vax program website at: [www.voteandvax.org](http://www.voteandvax.org).

## Your Vote Counts!

Find out where 2008 Republican Presidential candidate [John McCain](#) and Democratic Presidential candidate [Barack Obama](#) stand on healthcare. Also [click here](#) to see how the candidates respond to 10 questions about their healthcare reform proposals.

### **Absentee Voter Guide**

The Absentee Voter Guide, presented by the Harvard Institute of Politics, contains all the information college students need to vote by absentee ballot from school. [Click here](#) for more information.

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