

# American Chiropractic Association

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## ACA Ranked High Among Washington's Elite Lobbying Groups

### *Chiropractic's Voice on Capitol Hill Placed in Top 20 For Effectiveness on Health Care Issues*

**Washington, DC** — The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) runs one of the most influential advocacy operations in Washington, DC, according to a just-announced listing of the 25 most effective grassroots lobbying organizations for health care in the United States. The ACA is number 19 in a ranking compiled by an official of the American Political Science Association and reported in the *Washington Times* on November 26, 2003.

Out of thousands of groups that lobby Congress on health care issues, the ACA and just 24 other organizations are singled out for their effectiveness in communicating with Capitol Hill and recognized for being "highly successful in building connections between their members and Congress on a wide geographic basis."

"Our elite ranking confirms that the ACA and the chiropractic profession have a place at the table when health care policy decisions are made in Washington, DC," said ACA President Donald Krippendorf, DC. "Very simply, elected officials know that the ACA is a force to be reckoned with. When our members speak out on health care issues, they're listened to and heeded."

Michael T. Heaney, a research fellow with the American Political Science Association and the author of the ranking, conducted anonymous interviews with 77 health care aides to U.S. senators and congressmen/women between April and July 2003, a key point in consideration on Capitol Hill of legislation to modernize the Medicare program.

In explaining his findings in the *Washington Times*, Mr. Heaney said, "Many other organizations have members throughout the United States, but they may not be as effective in making their voices heard in Congress on health issues."

The ACA, the nation's largest chiropractic organization, has over 18,000 members, far fewer than many larger groups included in the ranking, including the American Medical Association (#2), AARP (#3), Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (#6), American Nurses Association (#15), the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (#21) and the American Physical Therapy Association (#24). Yet, the ACA's experienced government relations team and strong organizational emphasis on the grassroots activism and political involvement of its members has propelled the group into elite status on Capitol Hill.

The result has been several significant legislative victories for the chiropractic profession in recent years, the most recent being the inclusion of a Medicare Chiropractic Demonstration Project in recently-passed legislation (HR 1) overhauling the 38-year-old Medicare program. HR 1 passed the Senate and House of Representatives just prior to Thanksgiving and was signed into law by President Bush on December 8, 2003.

Other significant recent victories include:

**1997** - Congress Votes to Abolish Medicare's Burdensome Mandatory X-ray Requirement, a Longtime Barrier to Chiropractic Care for America's Seniors.

**2000** - Congress Establishes a Permanent Chiropractic Care Benefit for America's Active-Duty Military Personnel.

**2002** - Congress Establishes a Permanent Chiropractic Care Benefit for America's Veterans.

**2002** - Congress Includes Doctors of Chiropractic in a National Health Service Corps Student Loan Pilot Program.

