

ACC's 2009 Legislative Conference Takes the Hill by Storm

The ACC held its 2009 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., Sept. 13 – 15. The conference brought together more than 350 ACC members from nearly every state to learn more about issues facing the cardiovascular community, including the proposed 2010 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule, health care reform, medical malpractice and state advocacy.

Participants heard from a host of speakers, including: **Ron Brownstein**, political director for Atlantic Media Co.; **Robert Kocher, M.D.**, of the White House National Economic Council; **Geoff Gerhardt** of the House Ways and Means Committee; **Wendell Primus** from the office of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (Calif.); **Mike Dunn** of Dunn Associates; **James Paluskiewicz** from the Office of Rep. Michael Burgess (Texas) and **Dana Lichtenberg** from the office of Rep. Bart Gordon (Tenn.).

This year's conference was the largest ever, in part because of the proposed Medicare physician fee cuts that would have devastating impacts on the practice of cardiology. "We have to get involved," said **Zia Roshandel, M.D., F.A.C.C.**, a first-time Legislative Conference participant from Culpeper, Va. "If we don't, nobody else will do it for us." Roshandel, who was profiled in a previous issue of *Cardiology*, who would likely be forced to close his practice if the cuts go through.

On the final day of the conference, attendees made hundreds of visits to offices on Capitol Hill, reaching lawmakers and their staff to discuss the impact of the proposed cuts and the need for broad-based health system and payment reforms.

"We've been very successful in keeping people alive and healthy, and yet we are subject to the worst cuts we've seen in many years," said ACC President **Alfred Bove, M.D., Ph.D., F.A.C.C.**, in remarks during the conference. "We're here today because in the democratic process, if your voice isn't heard, nothing happens."

Visit ACC's blog, The Lewin Report (lewinreport.acc.org), for overviews of key sessions and posts from attending members. Slides, briefing materials and a video summary of the conference are also available on the Legislative Conference Web site at: www.acc.org/advocacy/leg_conf_09/about.htm. In addition to the Hill meetings and educational sessions, print and online ads timed to coincide with the conference ran Sept. 14 – 25 in the *National Journal*, *Politico*, *CongressDaily* and *Roll Call*. To view the ad, go to: qualityfirst.acc.org.



Jack Lewin, M.D.



Mike Dunn



Ron Brownstein



Wendell Primus



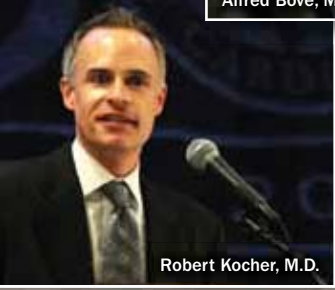
Dana Lichtenberg



Geoff Gerhardt



Alfred Bove, M.D.



Robert Kocher, M.D.



Jay Alexander, M.D.



David May, M.D.



James Paluskiewicz



Jim Fasules, M.D., James Dove, M.D., and Ralph Brindis, M.D.