



American Medical **Women's** Association  
The Vision and Voice of Women in Medicine since 1915

## **Policy and Advocacy Committee**

**May 1, 2007**---AMWA participated in Women's Health Month

**May 7, 2007**---- endorsed Rep Michael Michaud's bill, HR 2064, the Compassionate care for Servicewomen Act, to ensure that emergency contraception is stocked at each military health-care facility.

**May 8, 2007**----endorsed the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments modification act, HR 1237, to suspend and revise the current regulation that subjects pathologist and others who screen for cervical cancer to annual proficiency testing.

**May 29, 2007**----signed on with ACLU, NARAL, National Abortion Federation, National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Ass., National Women's Law Center, Planned Parenthood, Reproductive Health Technologies Project to oppose the Prescription Drug User Fee Amendment of 2007, S.1082, which includes mifepristone. It has been used safely since 1988 when it was first licensed in France and should not be held to a different standard than other drugs. Letter was sent to Senator E. Kennedy.

**May 30, 2007**----AMWA supported HR 4055 introduced by Rep. Rosa DeLauro to require Medicare coverage of HPV testing as part of cervical screening.

**May 31, 2007**--- individual AMWA members in conjunction with PNHP signed on online to promote Michael Moore's film, **Sicko**, which will be premiering June 29, 2007 bringing the case for single payer health insurance to the theaters of America.

**June 11, 2007**----sent an email to Adam Zimmerman at Pro-Choice America to oppose the Senate considering the nomination of Richard Honaker to the US District Court in Wyoming because his views on reproductive rights and religion will adversely affect the reproductive rights women have gained.

**June 11, 2007**---spoke to Carmen R. Green, MD a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow in Senator Christopher Dodd's office to endorse S.174, Children's Compassionate Care Act. It addresses palliative care for children including grants for training pediatric fellows.

**June 13, 2007**---Kimberly Sneed and Dr. Omega Silva attended the National Care Conference at the Ronald Reagan Building in DC, the theme of which was **the Voice of One, the Power of Many**. The conference covered three major issues:

Make bold investments to fight global poverty.

Empower women and girls to protect themselves and to fight HIV/AIDS.

Provide universal access to basic education.

Senator Chuck Hagel and Representative Nita Lowey spoke at the evening plenary.

AMWA is a partner with Care and had coauthored a coffee table book on women around the world

**June 18, 2007**---letter sent to Senator Max Baucus encouraging him to include a provision in the State children's Health Insurance Program, reauthorization that gives the option to cover legal immigrant children and pregnant women under Medicaid and the SCHIP.

**June 27, 2007**---signed on to a letter generated by The National Abortion Federation to endorse the Stop Deceptive Advertising for Women's Services Act (HR 2478).

**July 1, 2007**---signed on to the American Legacy Foundation's letter to R. J. Reynolds to ask the company to withdraw its new brand targeted for women and advertised as **Camel No. 9**.

**July 17, 2007**---AMWA sent letters to the House, Reps. Dingell and Rangel, on the SCHIP legislation (similar to the June 18<sup>th</sup> letter to Senator Baucus).

**July 17, 2007**---joined the Cytology Proficiency Improvement Coalition in a letter to ask members of the House to cosponsor the Improvement Act (H.R. 1237).

**July 30, 2007**---Dr. Omega Silva represented AMWA at a meeting of the NIH Peer Review Working Group. This group met with the Director of NIH, Dr. Elias Zerhouni, and the Co-chairs, Dr. Keith Yamamoto and Dr. Lawrence Tabak, to discuss the grant review process in an effort to offer suggestions to make the process less cumbersome and time consuming. This meeting in Washington, DC of the scientific society representatives is one of a series around the country.

**August 13, 2007**---Drs. Claudia Morrissey and Omega Silva attended the meeting of the National Women's Health Agenda Taskforce to discuss the creation of a plan for universal access to healthcare. The group sought a definition of **health** and decided to use the WHO definition. The group agreed on a general description of quality healthcare which is to be ratified by the groups represented.

**August 15, 2007**---signed on to the American Legacy Foundation's letter to R. J. Reynolds to withdraw advertising for Camel No.9 cigarettes which targets women and girls.

**August 26, 2007**---Dr. Susan L. Ivey wrote to Rep Lois Capps (Ca-23) to thank her for leading a group of 40 members of Congress to take action by sending letters to the editors of 11 women's magazines urging them to stop running ads for Camel No. 9 and all tobacco products.

**August 28, 2007**---Dr. Ivey sent a letter to her congressperson on behalf of Moms Rising to support the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

**September 1, 2007**---AMWA helped sponsor the Gynecologic Cancer Awareness activities with a coalition of organizations. AMWA signed on to the Sudan Divestment and Accountability Act requesting divestment from Darfur.

**September 17, 2007**---Dr. Omega Silva attended the Partners Meeting for the Vulvodynia Awareness Campaign of the Office Research on Women's Health, NIH and

signed on AMWA as a partner. A press launch will be held at the Press Club in DC on October 24 at 10 am.

**September 24, 2007**---Dr. Omega Silva attended the Policy Discussion of the American Public Health Association on Nov. 4, 2007 at the Renaissance Hotel 3:00-6:00 pm to discuss AMWA's ***Aid in Dying*** position paper. The APHA was considering a similar position paper. Kathryn Tucker, JD is the author of the paper.

**September 25, 2007**--- Dr. Omega Silva attended the American Legacy Foundation Luncheon in DC on November 26, 2007 to discuss ways to continue advocating for tobacco control and cessation issues.

**September 26, 2007**---AMWA released its new 2007 version of Aid in Dying position paper. It is available on the website at [www.amwa-doc.org](http://www.amwa-doc.org).

**September 26, 2007**---The Advocacy Committee agreed to allow the Sanarus Medical to present its new product for cryoablation of fibroadenomas of the breast at the annual meeting in Anaheim.

**October 1, 2007**---Sent a letter to President Bush asking him not to veto the SCHIP appropriation which passed the House and Senate.

**October 24, 2007**---Dr. Omega Silva attended the Launch Press Conference of the ***Vulvodynia Awareness Campaign*** of the Office of Women's Health at NIH. AMWA is a partner along with several other organizations in that campaign. It was held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.

**January 13, ---**The FDA is taking action on compounded menopausal hormonal drug preparations in no small part due to the advocacy of AMWA members. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sent letters warning seven pharmacy operations that the claims they make about the safety and effectiveness of their so-called "bio-identical hormone replacement therapy," or "BHRT" products are unsupported by medical evidence, and are considered false and misleading by the agency. FDA is concerned that unfounded claims like these mislead women and health care professionals.

**January 13, 2008**---Susan Ivey wrote a letter to the *Oregonian* protesting the use of the term *suicide* to describe aid in dying.

**January 17, 2008**---President –Elect (Claudia Morrissey) and the Past President (Susan Ivey) signed on to the Citizens' Petition to President Bush to provide support to the UN peacekeeping force in Darfur through our partner, Save Darfur Coalition.

**January 18, 2008**---AWMA signed onto the Amicus Brief of the National Advocates for Pregnant Women in the case of Amber Lovill who in the process of drug recovery became pregnant was serving a criminal sentence under a term of community service was ordered to serve time in jail and prison to protect her unborn child after the state of Texas learned of her pregnancy. This brief was filed in conjunction with the ACLU.

**January 29, 2008**---Dr. Omega Silva and Dr. Eliza Taylor attended the ***Hollywood on the Hill*** premiere of the showing of a film depicting cervical cancer survivors and how

advancements in screening and prevention made a difference. It was sponsored by the National Council of Women's Organizations Health Task force at the American Federation of Teachers building.

**January 30, 2008**---AMWA signed onto the second letter opposing the nomination of Richard Honaker to the U. S. District Court of Appeals because of his anti-choice stand and his application of his religious views to the interpretation of the law. See June 11, 2007. His hearing is set to occur on February 12, 2008 in the Senate.

**January 30, 2008**--- Drs. Galindo and Ivey sent a letter to the Director, Regulations and Rulings Division of the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau on its proposed labeling and advertising of wines, distilled spirits and malt beverages. They suggested labeling similar to serving facts on most foods.

**January 30, 2008**---Dr. Omega Silva reviewed the revised ***Educational Tool Kit on Beverage Alcohol Consumption*** of The Distilled Spirits Council. AMWA endorsed the previous version and its logo appears on the cover. Dr. Silva is on the Advisory Panel representing AMWA.

**February 7, 2008**---Dr. Susan Ivey wrote a letter to her Senators in support of the Health Care Improvement Act which will improve the care of Native Americans.

**February 22, 2008**---AMWA endorsed the position of the International Myeloma Foundation that generic Thalidomide should not be released by the FDA to treat the cutaneous lesions of leprosy without the usual instructions contained for myeloma regarding the teratogenic effects.

**March 3 2008**---AMWA signed on to S. 2510 which is the Senate version of the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments, HR. 1237, which AMWA endorsed May 8, 2007. This bill seeks to improve the diagnosis of cervical cancer.

**March 5, 2008**---AMWA signed onto the Senate version of HR4206, The Medicare Fracture Prevention and Osteoporosis Testing Act of 2007, sponsored by Senators Salazar and Snowe.

**March 17, 2008**---AMWA signed onto the Women and Health Care Coalition, a project of the National Family Planning and Reproduction Health Association. The mandate lists several congressional budget areas for women's health.

**March 18, 2008**---AMWA signed on to the letter of support and thank you to Senators Salazar and Snowe for introducing the Medicare Fracture Prevention Osteoporosis Testing Act (S. 2702) / (HR4206).

**March 23, 2008**---AMWA endorsed the Washington State Initiative 1-1000 on Aid in Dying.

**April 13, 2008**---AMWA endorsed the letter to Members of Congress expressing support for the position of the FDA on its warning letters to the compounding companies making "Bio-identical" Hormone Replacement Therapy spear headed by the National Partnership for Women and Families. These compounds have not been approved by the FDA.

**April 22, 2008**---Dr. Omega Silva representing AMWA on the panel at the press conference of the National Consumers League and Shape Up America on The Need for Useful Labeling on Beer, Wine and Distilled Spirits held at the National Press Building.

**April 22, 2008**---AMWA endorsed the North American Menopause Society's 2008 statement on the Hormone Position Statement which will be published in the July-August issue of the journal, *Menopause*.

**May 8, 2008**---AMWA signed on to the First Focus sign-on letter to President Bush and Secretary Leavitt regarding the August 17, 2007 SCHIP directive to request support and not a veto. AMWA is working with the National Association of Community Health Centers on this effort.

**May 16, 2008**---AMWA became a founding member of NWHAT, the National Women's Health Agenda Task Force.

**May 18, 2008**---AMWA signed on to a letter to Senators Reid, McConnell, Grassley, and Baucus to support the inclusion of preventive benefits in S2115 which would extend the period of time for the *Welcome to Medicare* physical examination to one year instead of six months.

**May 19, 2008**---AMWA signed onto a letter to President Bush initiated by Planned Parenthood of America to request preservation of Title X family planning programs as a federally funded program.

**May 21, 2008**---Dr. Silva did not attend the Academy of Pediatrics meeting on 5/21/2008 for health care provider organizations which are supporting guaranteed access as an AMWA representative, but got a report and the Mayo Clinic's and the Academy's recommendations for a health care plan from Robert T. Hall, JD, MPH who is the Assistant Director, DC Office (202)393-8600 Ext 3309, email [rhall@aap.org](mailto:rhall@aap.org).

**June 11, 2008**---AWMA sent a statement reiterating our position on HRT endorsed in the May 19, 2008 letter to Congress (see April 13 above) in response to the International Academy of Compounding Pharmacists' rebuttal letter on its website accusing all the signers of that letter of being supported by Wyeth.

**June 13, 2008**---AMWA signed onto a letter requesting that Congress increase funding for the Infertility Prevention Program within the Centers for Disease Control initiated by ASHA.

**July 26, 2008**---AMWA signed on to the letter to President Bush asking him not to reduce contraception access; this action was initiated by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

**October 20, 2008**---AMWA joined in on the tag line of a national TV spot which focused on why it is important to confront the candidates on what they will do to promote preventive care; it featured stars such as Lauren Bacall. Mark Blum helped to orchestrate AMWA's involvement.

**October 27, 2008**---AMWA signed onto a letter from CARE asking the President to re-engage in the fight against global poverty.

**November 3, 2008**---AMWA signed onto an Amicus brief with the National Advocates for Pregnant Women in the case of Michelle Geiser Behles vs. North Dakota on her alleged abuse of prescription drugs while pregnant. She had a miscarriage.

**November 10, 2008**---AMWA signed on to a protest to Philip Morris with the Legacy Foundation to declare its Pink Purse Packs a veiled attempt to attract more women victims into the smoking population.

**November 12, 2008**---AMWA signed onto two letters to make healthcare reform a priority. The first goes to President-elect Obama to make the subject a main concern by calling a healthcare summit. The second goes to Congressional leaders to do the same in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. These initiatives were spearheaded by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, SEIU, the Catholic Health Association and Families USA with the Herndon Alliance

**November 18, 2008**---AMWA signed onto a letter to the FDA Obstetrics and Gynecology Devices Advisory Committee urging a favorable decision regarding the use of the female condom especially because of its protection against HIV/AIDS.

**December 29, 2008**---The ACLU and National Advocates for Pregnant Women posted a victory in the Lovill vs. Texas case AMWA signed onto on January 18, 2008.

**January 6, 2009**---AMWA signed on to a letter to President-Elect Obama to tackle the national problem of overweight and obesity in children and adults as they are an epidemic that needs to be addressed as part of the healthcare problem. The letter was initiated by the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

**January 17, 2009**---AMWA signed onto a letter to the Senate initiated by the National Center for Immigrant Women's Rights urging the Senate to pass the reauthorization of the SCHIP program which now includes immigrant children.

**January 28, 2009**---AMWA signed onto a letter to Senator Baucus requesting special consideration be given to women's health, that specific items be included, and that uninsured women be included in any bill emanating from his committee, The Senate Committee on Finance. This effort is being lead by the National Women's Law Center.

**January 31, 2009**---Dr. Omega Silva attended the Herndon Alliance annual meeting at the Mayflower Hotel at which its 2009 board was ratified and listened to presentations on healthcare moderated by Bob Crittenden with survey research by Celinda Lake on the *Cost of Doing Nothing*, Public Plan by Richard Kirsch with **Healthcare for America Now**, Anthony Wright of **Health Access California** and Ron Pollack of **Families USA** on state and national work to maximize chances for national reform. The group agreed it must be done this year or never and the president's budget must get the ball rolling. The discussion was centered on effective ways to push the process.

**February 16, 2009**---AMWA signed on to a letter generated by the Alliance for Justice regarding the Medical Device Safety Act which advocates especially for women who may be harmed by devices marked specifically to control women's reproductive health.

**March 3, 2009**---AMWA signed onto a letter initiated by the Society for Women's Health Research to urge congressmen to sign on to sponsor HR1032, the HEART for Women Act, which would bolster efforts for research, education and heart disease screenings for uninsured and underinsured women.

**March 4, 2009**---AMWA sent a letter to the Deputy Managing Editor of the Associated Press concerning the media reports on the Final Exit Network which has been charged with assisting suicides in Arizona. The media seems to have confused legal aid in dying with assisting suicides.

**March 27, 2009**---AMWA decided to partner with Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health to sponsor a day of lobbying on the Hill on June 12, 2009 to advocate for the Reproductive and Sexual Health bill. We will have training on the bill and how to lobby on the 11<sup>th</sup> sponsored by PRCH for only 15 AMWA members who will sign up for the day to participate in the program at the Hyatt Regency on the Hill. The Policy and Advocacy committee prepared an announcement for the event at our meeting at the Annual Meeting on March 22, 2009 in Williamsburg which should be in circulation soon.

**April 27, 2009**---AMWA has teamed up with the National Academies of Practice to bring patients' and practitioners' voices to health care reform sometime in mid May when it is anticipated the bill will be completed and a hearing will be held.

**May 19, 2009**---AMWA has joined the National Physicians Alliance and the American Medical Student Association to push for a Public Health Plan in the health care reform options. Individual members will sign on by email.

**May 25, 2009**---AMWA signed onto the Medical Amicus Brief, Baxter v. Montana in the interest of providing aid in dying. Other parties include the AMSA, Drs. Deric Weiss, Kathryn Borgenicht and Donald Hicks.

**June 2, 2009**---Drs. Omega Silva and Mary Alice Crockett participated in the National Academies of Practice and Coalition's Call to Action~Support Healthcare Reform at the Rayburn Building Judiciary Committee Room 2237. On the Frontlines: Providers and Patients Alert Congress about Access, Choice and Coordinated Care included NAP officers, Marie DiCowden, PhD and Mary Costanza, MD, and four patients' stories as well as Barbara Ross-Lee, DO, Dean New York College of Osteopathic Medicine on the public option. Legislative Aids from Congressmen John Conyer's, Barney Frank's, and Wexler's offices spoke on their congressman's hopes for a universal health plan to be enacted during this term. The NAP proposes the Medical Home and Community Home as well as an At Home model for health care all with coordinated interdisciplinary care.

**June 9-10, 2009**---Drs. Omega Silva and Mary Alice Crockett attended the Fracture Prevention Coalition's day on the Hill for the reception on Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> and the Briefing on Wednesday the 10<sup>th</sup> of ***Osteoporosis and DXA: A Role Model for Chronic Disease Prevention***. AMWA is a member of the coalition.

**June 10, 2009**---AMWA was asked by the National Consumers League to participate in the Best Privacy Practices Coalition it was forming to ensure that pharmacy communications protect patient privacy. Linda Golodner, a former president of the League and someone with whom Dr. Omega Silva had worked previously, asked Dr. Silva to join them. Most of the work will be done by email.

**June 11-12, 2009**---AMWA and Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health participated in a lobby day for health care reform to include among other items reproductive health care for women. Thursday the 11<sup>th</sup> was spent on lobbying 101 with role playing and practice for the meetings with Representatives and Senators on Friday the 12<sup>th</sup>. PRCH provided the speakers and set up the meetings and Maggie Juliand of Representative Louise M. Slaughter's office did the insider's prospective. Drs. Bea Desper, Roberta Gebhard, Claudia Morrissey and Omega Silva, Nancy Hicks, and several medical students represented AMWA.

**June 17, 2009**---AMWA signed onto a coalition letter in response to a request by Senators' Snowe and Mikulski to gather support for the inclusion of the offices of women's health in the HELP committee's health reform legislation, formally known last Congress as [S. 612, or the Women's Health Office Act](#). The request came from the Society for Women's Health Research.

**June 18, 2009**---Dr. Omega Silva attended a White House meeting with physicians on healthcare in the context of prevention and cutting costs with Drs. Zeke Emanuel, Bob Kocher, Kavita Patel and Dora Hughes co-moderating the discussion. Dr. Silva's suggestion on preventing obesity by having retired physicians engage children in discussions to educate them about nutrition and health with the eventual goal of changing attitudes about food was recorded at HeathReform.gov. She commented on the difficulty of treating obesity.

**June 27, 2009**---AMWA signed onto an Amicus Brief with the National Partnership for Women in the case of Reeves v C. H. Robinson Worldwide, Inc on sexual harassment in the work place.

**July 9, 2009**---AMWA signed on to Senator Mikulski's amendment 201, the Women's Health Amendment, to ensure that health care reform meets the needs of women.

**July 12, 2009**---AMWA signed onto a letter urging Congress to include the Medicare adult day care services act in health care reform along with 75 other organizations. This effort was spearheaded by the Alzheimer' Foundation of America and the American Academy of Neurology Professional Association.

**July 15, 2009**---On Wednesday July 15, 2009, a group visited the Hill on behalf of the National Physicians' Alliance to which AMWA belongs. AMWA's name appeared on the Alliance cover letter.

The following people attended:

Jamie Moran, MD, MPH Hospitalist, Shady Grove Hospital, NPA member  
Krishnan Narasimhan, MD, Assistant Professor, Howard University, NPA  
Fareen Qurashi, AMSA medical student  
Omega C. Logan Silva, MD, MACP, Past President, AMWA

Juanita Smith, MD, Hospitalist, Shady Grove Hospital, NPA  
Sanjeev Sriram, MD Harvard Fellow, NPA  
Pauline Titus-Dillon, MD, MACP, former Sen. Assoc. Dean, Howard University College  
of Medicine, AMWA member  
Aileen Watchko, NPA Staff

We appeared in our white coats receiving attention from a reporter from the Washington Times as we assembled at the entrance to the Dirksen Senate Office Building. The prescriptions and letters from constituents were delivered in folders with information about the NPA with appropriate comments to staff to please support President Obama's health reform plan and the public health option to the following Senators:

Lamar Alexander, TN  
Evan Bayh, IN  
Robert Bennett, UT  
Christopher Bond, MO  
Richard Burr, NC  
Roland Burris, IL  
Maria Cantwell, WA  
Robert Casey, PA  
Susan Collins, ME  
Kay Hagan, NC  
John Kerry, MA  
Patrick Leahy, VT  
Carl Levin, MI  
Blanche Lincoln, AR  
Edward Kennedy, MA  
Mel Martinez, FL  
John McCain, AR  
Jeff Merkley, OR  
Patty Murray, WA  
Mark Pryor, AR  
Bernard Sanders, VT  
Olympia Snowe, ME  
James Webb, VA  
Mark Warner, VA

Many of the staff knew their Senator's stand on the issue and some revealed that the Senator had not taken a public stance as yet. We commented that we hoped the letters and prescriptions from the senator's constituents would positively influence the final vote of those undecided and coerce those against the plan to support the plan.

Senator Blanche Lincoln who was just leaving as we approached returned to greet us and mentioned that she was late for a committee meeting on the plan which she supports.

Since we did not have time to deliver all the packets, Ms Watchko and the AMSA members delivered the remainder on the House side the next day.

**July 19, 2009**---AMWA signed onto HR 3200, the America's Affordable Health Choices Act just released from the three relevant House Committees. It is the legislation President Obama is advocating be passed.

**July 29, 2009**---AMWA signed onto the amicus brief of the ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project of a 25 year old mother who had local government intervene in her care and demand that she go on prescribed bed rest even though she had two children at home. No offer of assistance with child care was tendered.

**September 2, 2009**---AMWA signed onto the letter from the National Coalition of Women's Organizations to Congress outlining the requirements for women's health that should be addressed in a health care reform bill especially the need for a public option.