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Mission

The Alliance for CME is a membership organization that provides professional development opportunities for CME professionals, advocates for CME and the profession, and strives to improve health care outcomes.

October 22, 2007

Dear Alliance Member,

The Alliance's officers, Executive Director and public relations consultant met with David Schwartz, a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee's staff in Washington, DC this past week. He was one of the primary authors of the recently issued report titled "Use of Educational Grants by Pharmaceutical Manufacturers".

We had a very straightforward, positive discussion with David Schwartz whereby we had an opportunity to explain the Alliance's mission and role within the CME educational community. We felt it was important for the Senate Finance Committee to recognize that the Alliance provides an open forum for the ongoing debate of CME issues, and that our membership represents every segment of the CME community. Equally important, we positioned the Alliance as the go-to resource for ongoing input and dialogue as, together, we strive to achieve truly independent educational activities that serve the interests of physicians and their patients.

Our meeting provided us with insight into the desired goals of the Senate Finance Committee in light of its review of CME educational activities. Here are the messages that we took away from our conversation with David Schwartz.

- The Senate Finance Committee is seeking assurance that CME educational activities are truly independent and free of any commercial influence. The public must be confident that the continuing education offered to physicians is scientifically based, objective, balanced and independent of bias.
- CME educational providers should insist upon transparency and disclosure of all industry affiliations. The Senate Finance Committee believes that sales and marketing events should be identified as such and that there should be no intermingling of these types of events with CME educational activities.
- The Senate Finance Committee does not object to the commercial support of CME educational activities provided they are well intended and transparent. They acknowledge the value of industry sponsored educational activities when they fully conform to the ACCME's accreditation standards for commercial support.
- David Schwartz noted that many professions regulate or "police" their own professions through some form of licensure or accreditation process. The Senate Finance Committee accepts the ACCME's accreditation model as being a viable approach for regulating the CME profession, although they believe the process

needs to be strengthened. They stressed the need for a more concurrent review of CME activities to insure compliance with the standards as well as the development of stronger enforcement actions. According to David Schwartz, the CME industry has a responsibility to take appropriate disciplinary actions when faced with non-compliance by an accredited organization, to include loss of accreditation if necessary.

The meeting was a first step in what we hope will be ongoing discussions surrounding the delivery of high quality, evidence based CME educational activities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue Ann Capizzi".

Sue Ann Capizzi, MBA
President