

## Memorandum

**Date:** September 11, 2009

**To:** Legislative and Public Policy Committee  
ADA Political Action Committee  
Affiliate Presidents, Presidents-elect, Executive Directors  
Public Policy Coordinators  
State Policy Representatives  
Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education Chair  
Commission on Dietetic Registration Chair  
Dietetic Practice Group Chairs, Chairs-elect, Executive Directors  
House of Delegates  
Member Interest Group Chairs

**cc:** ADA Board of Directors

**From:** Patricia M. Babjak, Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** **Public Policy and Advocacy**

Health reform has focused attention on ADA public policy and advocacy efforts as never before. We know there is a renewed interest and focus on the role of food and nutrition in promoting health. Nutrition is a key tenet of this reform and is included in discussions in the halls of Congress to *The New York Times*. We know this is an opportunity we need to seize. To make sure we are at the right tables, an environmental scan, evaluating our current national and grassroots efforts will be conducted, identifying potential opportunities and challenges to assist us in revitalizing our efforts.

As we await the results and recommendations of the environmental scan process, we will be moving forward swiftly, contracting with a policy and communications consultant to work in collaboration with ADA's leadership, including the Board of Directors, Legislative and Public Policy Committee and ADA's Political Action Committee to identify key priority issues and effective advocacy strategies. We will also turn to our very important grassroots network to obtain members' perspectives and feedback on these efforts.

We know our work today will impact our future, revitalizing our strategies to strengthen our voice, our presence and our influence on policy and public opinion. Immediate action is imperative. We will use our proven plus new integrated tactical efforts – advocacy, strategic issues communications, coalition building – to achieve results that matter to you as members and that optimize the health of our nation through food and nutrition.

While we have experienced success in the past, the strategies that we have used may not be the most effective in the current environment, requiring a fresh approach and leadership.

ADA Vice President for Policy Initiatives Stephanie Patrick, ADA Director of Government Relations Ron Smith, and I have reviewed our current plan. After careful and thoughtful consideration, Stephanie and Ron have elected to leave ADA as of Friday, September 11, 2009. I know you join me in thanking them for their efforts and wishing them success in future endeavors. During this transition period, the ADA Washington office will be managed by Mary Hager, PhD, RD, FADA. Our policy, advocacy and government relations work will continue with a combination of in-house and contracted services. Position descriptions are currently being updated and will be posted shortly on our Web site [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

PMB:mlo

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