

AAFP Congress of Delegates Report
October 1-3, 2007 Chicago Ill.

WOW! What exciting times for Family Doctors! This year's Congress of Delegates was loaded with hope and opportunity for moving our country toward a medical model built on the foundation of Family Physicians as the medical home for America's health. Industry representatives, researchers, and political analysts seem to be finally recognizing the economic logic of centering the fix for America's broken health care system around the family physician medical model, including acknowledging the inequities of payment for primary care physician resources expended when medically managing a patient panel.

Your Alaska delegation to the AAFP Congress in Chicago this year was visible, vocal and unrelenting in advocating for the needs of Alaskan Family Doctors. Barb Doty as Alaskan Delegate chaired the Reference Committee on Education where our resolution submitted by our chapter entitled, "A Comprehensive, Integrated and Sustained Approach to the Education, Recruitment and Retention of Family Physicians for Rural Practice" was adopted for the 2007-2008 Commission and Committee agenda. John Cullen, or second senior delegate, gave extensive testimony along with the Montana, Idaho, New Mexico and Washington delegations supporting establishment of a Working Group on Rural with representation from each of the Commissions and Committees. This working group would convene to specifically respond to the issues of the 21% of AAFP members who practice in rural or frontier settings, and report back to the Board. Marin Granholm completed a successful year on the AAFP board representing the New Physicians, and Jennifer Hyer, a newly recruited intern at the Alaska Family Medicine Residency, completed her year as the elected student board representative. Significant testimony was heard during the Congress promoting the work of Julia Sicilia, Paul Davis and others in establishing a core list of procedures for Family Physicians; an article in the Annals of Family Medicine is expected next issue which will outline details of this concept. Campaign selection of Ted Epperly (Id) president-elect, and new board members Glen Steam (WA) David Ellington (VA) and Ken Berke (Ohio) was felt to be a positive move for the Alaska chapter. Next year's Congress and Scientific Assembly will be held in 2008 in San Diego, followed by Boston in 2009 and Denver in 2010.

Resolutions passed this year included actions enhancing Electronic Health Record inter-compatibility and portability using a universal Continuity of Care Record, support for families of deployed military personnel, continued support of CME and website maintenance on Disaster Preparedness, reaffirmation and support for TAR WARS program including expanded funding partnerships, an updated statement on Improving Cultural Proficiency and Care to Minority and Medically Underserved Communities, and a bylaws change allowing Uniformed Services Chapter membership for deployed family physicians .

Barbara J. Doty, MD, Delegate