

NEWS

Association for Healthcare Philanthropy

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How Do You Get President Bush's Undivided Attention? Take Out an Advertisement in the Waco (TX) Tribune-Herald!

WASHINGTON, D.C., (April 26, 2002) – How do you get President Bush's attention on an issue critical to your membership? By taking out an advertisement in the largest daily newspaper near the President's ranch in Crawford, TX.

That is what the non-profit Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP) did today, running a one-half page advertisement in the Waco (TX) Tribune-Herald, a 40,000 circulation daily printed 15 minutes from Mr. Bush's presidential retreat. The Association decided to run the advertisement when the President "was away from the clutter and inside-the-beltway politics of Washington, DC, and in a more relaxed setting on his ranch where he might see it," said AHP CEO William McGinly. "It also doesn't hurt our cause that a Saudi official is visiting the President in Crawford, or that top Republican donors are attending a barbeque later this Friday. The more the newsmakers, the more likely our advertisement will be seen and reported on," Mr. McGinly said.

The advertisement, which contained AHP's logo, phone number and web address, reads:

DEAR MR. BUSH: IT ISN'T BROKEN SO WHY FIX IT?

PRESIDENTS JOHNSON, FORD, CARTER, REAGAN, AND BUSH ALL DEEMED ACCESS TO MEDICAL PATIENTS' "DEPARTMENT OF SERVICE" INFORMATION CORRECT AND NECESSARY FOR NON-PROFIT HEALTH CARE FUNDRAISING. HEALTH CARE FUNDRAISING BENEFITS THE POOR AND UNDERSERVED.

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN. PLEASE DIRECT HHS TO AMEND THE HIPAA PRIVACY RULE AND ALLOW NON-PROFIT PHILANTHROPIC HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS CONTINUED ACCESS TO CHARITABLE SUPPORTERS AND GRATEFUL PATIENTS. AHP MEMBERS THANK YOU!

At issue is whether non-profit, philanthropic health care fundraising professionals will continue to have access to medical patients' demographic information, including which department they may have received treatment. The department of service information is used to address fundraising appeals to grateful patients and supporters who want to be able to support their doctor, their hospital or institution, or the department where they received their care. AHP reports that philanthropic health care professionals raised over \$7 Billion in 2000, with funds going to help the poor and the needy across the nation.

However, because of unfounded privacy concerns, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has proposed a HIPAA medical privacy rule which would deny access to the critically needed department of service information. The HHS public comment period ends today, April 26th.

"President Bush needs to understand that non-profit health care fundraising professionals provide for essential health care services and never reveal or misuse private medical records, which we protect through our own Professional Standards of Conduct and Donor Bill of Rights," said Mr. McGinly. "Our fundraising allows grateful patient donors to provide health care services to low-income and immigrant populations, or to fund life-giving diagnostic and monitoring equipment to those less fortunate. Denying us access to basic donor information as part of health care operations will lead to generic mass mailings, which are inefficient, ineffective and expensive, and will reduce the flow of philanthropic support," he added.

"The Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan and Bush Administrations all deemed access to patients' 'department of service' information correct and necessary for non-profit health care fundraising. So AHP asks: 'Mr. Bush, It isn't broken so why fix it?' and would like the President to intervene with HHS and amend the HIPAA privacy rule to allow philanthropic health care professionals continued access to charitable supporters and grateful patients," Mr. McGinly said.

AHP, established in 1967, is a not-for-profit organization whose 3,100 members manage philanthropic programs in 1,900 of the nation's 3,400 not-for-profit health care providers. AHP members raised more than \$7 billion in FY 2000.

