



Dear _____,

Happy New Year! 2009 is poised to be an exciting year for family medicine. The 111th Congress will convene today and President-elect Obama will be sworn in to office on January 20.

Soon, health care reform will begin to take center stage – we want you to be prepared. We anticipate that the economic stimulus legislation that Congress will take up soon will include several health care provisions. Once we have the details of the proposal, we'll ask you to contact your legislators with a specific message.

This email is the first in a series of monthly grassroots training emails intended to help you, our top advocates, speak out for family medicine.

I would like to take a moment and tell you about Speak Out, the Academy's online advocacy tool. It allows you to become more familiar with and actively influence policies that affect family medicine and your patients. Speak Out contains updated legislative data and online tools that allow you to have an active roll in the political process.

Some of the features of Speak Out are:

Action Alerts -- The AAFP will routinely email you an action alert and post it on Speak Out (capitol.aafp.org). Click on the alert to find an easy process by which you can send personalized messages to officials and policymakers and let them know what you think. Be sure to fill out your contact info to verify that your message was sent from an individual and not generated by a computer.

Research and Contact Elected Officials – Speak Out contains a comprehensive government directory that is updated regularly. Keep up with changes of legislators and their staff members here. <http://capitol.aafp.org/aafp/directory/congdir.tt>

Track Legislation – The Issues section allows you to keep track of important bills and votes. Click here to learn more. <http://capwiz.com/aafp/issues/>

Media Guide – Tell your story. Use the media guide to find contact information for local media outlets, editors, reporters, and producers. <http://capwiz.com/aafp/dbq/media/>.

Speak Out enables us to deliver critical message to lawmakers and ensures that our legislative agenda is received and heard at the Capitol. I hope you check it out today!

Sincerely,

Erica Fischer
Grassroots Advocacy Specialist