Regional Advocacy Update

Background: HLC’s Regional Advocacy Program has long been one of the most respected among trade associations and policy advocates. Because a message carries greater resonance if a member of Congress hears it directly from constituents, HLC has taken its advocacy “on the road” to communicate with lawmakers when they are working in their home states and congressional districts. HLC continues to achieve results by taking its message beyond the Capital Beltway.

The backbone of the HLC Regional Advocacy Program is the use of Health Leadership Teams (HLTeams). Six HLC regional directors bring together HLTeams, comprised of HLC member company representatives, local business allies, and community health advocates, to engage with senators and representatives in their respective states and districts. HLTeams present a consensus, crosssectoral viewpoint on healthcare issues from the “real world” perspective of constituents explaining the impact of Washington policies on local patients and jobs. During the pandemic, HLC regional directors have engaged team members virtually and will continue to do so for the time being.

Key Regional Advocacy Activities:
As of August 31, regional directors coordinated or participated in nearly 150 advocacy activities and meetings. Some of these activities included:

- **In-District Meetings with Members of Congress.** In-district meetings provide an opportunity for members of Congress to hear directly from their constituents and consider issues affecting the entire healthcare industry and provide HLC members the opportunity to educate members of Congress on topics of importance. HLC regional directors have coordinated over 80 in-district or state meetings with members of Congress, a third with members on key committees of healthcare jurisdiction.

  **Senate Finance Committee**
  Sen. Richard Burr (R/NC)  Sen. Ben Sasse (R/NE)
  Sen. Michael Crapo (R/ID)  Sen. Ron Wyden (D/OR)

  **Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee**
  Sen. Mike Braun (R/IN)  Sen. Roger Marshall (R/KS)
  Sen. Richard Burr (R/NC)  Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R/AK)

  **Other Senate Committees**
  Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D/IL)  Sen. Ron Johnson (R/WI)
  Sen. Deb Fischer (R/NE)  Sen. Cynthia Lummis (R/WY)
New Member Orientation. Cornerstones of HLC’s regional advocacy program are the HLC Candidate Program and New Member Orientation Program. Developing relationships with lawmakers early on has proven to be an investment in future interactions as these members gain seniority in Congress. In 2021, HLC is meeting with a variety of new members of Congress, focusing
on meeting with freshman members of Congress who could be healthcare champions and help advocate the HLC agenda. HLC, along with AMN Healthcare, presented its Gateway to Innovation award to freshman Representative Sara Jacobs (D/CA) for her leadership in working with other solutions-oriented members in Congress to help every American gain access to innovative, high-quality healthcare.

**Healthcare Coffee and Conversation.** HLC’s Healthcare Coffee and Conversation events introduce congressional members and candidates to the Washington, D.C., healthcare community and build upon those relationships made with members of Congress and candidates through the regional meetings. HLC has hosted Representatives Dwight Evans (D/PA), Scott Peters (D/CA), Kathleen Rice (D/NY), William Timmons (R/SC), and Senator Angus King (I/ME) for virtual “coffees.”

- **Grassroots, Grassttstops Campaigns, and Regional Roundtables.** HLC regional directors are instrumental in advocating on key healthcare issues, as well as being experts in the community. HLC regional directors recruited cosponsors for, and educated congressional offices on, legislation and issues of importance to HLC’s membership, including the “TREAT Act,” disaster preparedness, and telehealth, among other issues. HLC regional directors have garnered half of the TREAT Act cosponsors to date.

- **Awards Programs.** HLC uses the Regional Advocacy Program to recognize and reward organizations and congressional members for excellence in promoting quality healthcare and innovation. HLC’s “Redefining American Healthcare Award” recognizes practices and programs in communities and organizations across the nation that optimize care for vulnerable patients. Award recipients are organizations developing and activating cost-effective, measurable community programs promoting a patient-centered approach to care that considers outside social factors in order to achieve the best outcomes.
  - On August 9, HLC, along with Atrium Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, and Representative Alma Adams (D/NC), honored Care Ring in a virtual ceremony. Care Ring serves as a link within the community to affordable, high-quality preventive healthcare.
  - On August 24, HLC, along with Amgen and Representative Mark DeSaulnier (D/CA), honored the Lazarex Cancer Foundation in a virtual ceremony. The Lazarex Cancer Foundation created programs that work to provide equitable and timely access to cancer discovery for all patients.