

AMCHP 2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

What Washington Wants to Hear: Explaining Your Programs to Congress

March 1st to 5th, 2008

JOSHUA BROWN: Thanks, Julio. We're actually going to wait until the end of the session before we get to questions and answer period, but I know people probably have a lot of questions for Julio.

Julio, I think you touched on two important issues. Number one is that we're really kind of in the beginning of the appropriations process here. I think people as they're at meetings will hear Dr. Van Dyke stand up and present the president's budget as been given to him.

It's important to remember that that's not the actual budget for the country, that's really just a starting point to begin with. There's a lot of work to be done before we actually get to the end of the process.

The other thing that really struck me that Julio said was that every congressional member is important, because you never know who is not on a committee today that may actually end up on a committee tomorrow or next year or some other

time, you never know who will have certain influence whether they're on a committee or not on a committee. And I think that's really what we need is that kind of champion for the Title V block grant that man or woman who are going to kind of go into the room and say all right, that's it, I'm not leaving until we fully fund the block grant and we'll stay here days if we have to until we get it done.

And so thank you for that, Julio.

Well in the spirit of the whole interactive thing and since we know it's kind of late, before I get to Chris I'm actually first of all going to introduce our Director of Legislation and Policy, Brent Ewig, who is I hope going to come up here because Brent and I are actually going to do a little bit of roll playing. Is there anyone here who is actually making hill visits during this annual meeting? Oh, good, we have a few people. And have many of you all made hill visits before? Well you may have run actually into a problem.

What we're going to hope to do here is give you an example of a bad hill visit and then after we hear from Chris hopefully use some of those lessons we learn from Chris in a good hill visit.

So if I could just ask Brent to come in. What we're going to do is I'm actually going to play a congressional staffer that perhaps has the oversight of the health legislation. Brent's going to come in as kind of the AMCHP member. We're going

to stand to the side here because oftentimes when you go to visit your member, you actually do not get to sit down at a table. They'll ask you to meet in the lobby, They'll ask you to meet in the hall, I think Brent and I may have met in the bathroom at one point. (Laughter) But just realize we're kind of winging this and we'll see how it goes. But, anyway, Brent will be the lobbyist, as it were, and I'll be the health staffer.

BRENT EWING: And actually we meant to do this at the beginning, so this is a good lesson. I later got held up in the hall and I didn't call ahead to let Josh know that I wasn't going to be here. So that's step number one. It's okay to be late but call ahead and let them know. And with that, hi there. Sorry I'm late.

JOSHUA BROWN: That's all right. I only have about five minutes tops. I got a meeting I got to get to.

BRENT EWING: We talk about we need funding for MCH, for Title V, MCH, we need funding. So you can see there's a lot of need and --

JOSHUA BROWN: First of all, Title V is that the clean air act, because I'm aware there's a Title V clean air act. Is that what you're talking about?

BRENT EWING: No, Title V maternal and child health block grant.

JOSHUA BROWN: Okay. I'm not exactly aware of what that is, but I see you brought a lot of materials here.

BRENT EWING: Yeah. And I could get you something on that. It's been around a long time. And it's a good program. It does good things for moms and kids, and it needs more money, so we need more money. (Laughter)

JOSHUA BROWN: Generally when I talk to my boss her really important issue is really kind of what the money is buying. She always asks me well what am I paying for with this money.

BRENT EWING: Well, programs. We do programs, and they're for moms and kids and now -- we don't do it in your state but in another state because they're doing some great work on infant mortality. I'm not sure what we're doing -- I forgot what state you're from, but let me assure you they're doing programs.

JOSHUA BROWN: Well, I'm sure you're aware of the new kind of pay go rules, and that kind of forces us to balance the budget as we fund programs. If I were to fund this program, are there other programs maybe I could take money from?

BRENT EWING: The Bush tax cuts.

JOSHUA BROWN: My boss actually cosponsored some of those bills.

BRENT EWING: Whoops. I didn't know that. But you could end the war?

JOSHUA BROWN: Again, as you recall, my boss gave a talk down on the house floor where we were in support of the war, so I don't think I'm going to --

BRENT EWING: Whoops. Oh, you know those other health programs don't work. Take the money from them.

JOSHUA BROWN: All right. Well, I'll certainly take that into account. You have a lot of material, it would be great if you could kind of summarize it. But you got a lot going on here. What I'll do is I'll actually have to talk to my boss and we'll see what happens and we'll get back to you.

BRENT EWING: Okay. Thank you for agreeing to fully fund it. We appreciate that.

JOSHUA BROWN: All right. Well, with that being said, Chris is having flashbacks to his last week, I'm sure.

As I mentioned before, Chris is a legislative assistant for Representative Gwen Moore's office of Wisconsin. I'm hoping Chris will get up here as I said and give us some of the tips and tricks and actual dollar amounts it's going to take to get legislation passed, how much money we actually have to give Chris, how many

actual cruises that we have to take Chris on. You're not allowed to do any of those things, I'm kidding him but, Chris, please.