

Letter from the CEO

Roy Snell

For the following reasons, HCCA does not lobby for or against regulations.

If we lobby, even for one regulation, we lose our unique position and our unbiased reputation. I see this as a slippery slope much like an addiction. One action leads to another. Although great arguments have been made to lobby for one issue, it could lead to more. We could end up like all the other organizations that have spent years and millions of dollars telling people what the regulations should or shouldn't be, while their members pay millions of dollars in fines and penalties, endure ruined reputations, and on occasion, go to jail.

1) Maintaining independence and unbiased position

The compliance community, much like compliance programs, is not for or against regulations. We just make sure our organizations follow the regulations. If we take ownership of some regulations and not others, we lose our unbiased position. The compliance community's ability to be—and remain—unbiased toward any regulation is very important.

2) Focusing time and effort on compliance activity

Lobbying takes time. Every hour spent lobbying takes away time that could be spent conducting efforts to help healthcare organizations comply with regulations. Thousands of associations invest millions of dollars each year to adopt a position or spend their time taking a position on regulations. We are one of very few associations (I personally don't know of any others) that do not lobby. This is what sets our association and our profession apart from all others. If half the money that has been spent on lobbying was spent on complying with regulations, healthcare would not be the most fined and penalized industry in U.S. history. If there were half the fervor and passion for compliance as there is for lobbying, healthcare would not be demonized to the degree we now are.

3) Is it critical for HCCA to provide a lobbying function?

A key point here is that those who need a voice and the worthy causes that benefit from lobbying are not left out in the cold. There are many places to turn for help, including the American Health Lawyers Association, American Healthcare Association, the Medical Group Management Association, The American Medical Association, and others.



There are consulting firms, lobbying firms, law firms, lobbyist associations, non-profit organizations, and millions of individuals who can and do perform this function. This is not a service that needs our help. The fact that we are alone in our position (not lobbying) is remarkable, given the millions of dollars of fines in healthcare on a weekly basis. It seems so obvious that more help is needed complying rather than lobbying.

**“Don't forget.
Don't lobby.
Don't lobby,
even one time.”**

We don't need more lobbying. There is enough (some would say too much) already. We don't need to spend more time lobbying; we need to spend more time complying. The HCCA needs to maintain our independence and unbiased perspective. Lobbying is easy, interesting, and important. It is also a slippery slope. I have been with this organization since the name and mission were doodled on a napkin. We used my pen. However, when I am gone, it's all yours. I will not worry or second guess. Between my position as the first President and my position as CEO, I spent two years not worrying. In fact, it was blissful. I had no problem letting go. When I move on from my position as CEO, I assure you, I will leave the worrying up to you. When I am gone, you can change and rearrange this organization without any criticism from me. As I did after I was President, I will just bask in the thrill of what we all have created. However, if you hang on to one thing that I said or did, it would be: “Don't forget. Don't lobby. Don't lobby, even one time.” ■