

Legislative Trends and Challenges for

Speech-Language Pathologists
And Audiologists
North Carolina's Advocacy Efforts

CSAP May 2010

What In the world happened?

National Economy

- ▶ Banks/Mortgage Companies Failed Causing Panic
- ▶ Joblessness
 - 12 Million Unemployed
- ▶ Reduced spending
- ▶ Balanced budget required

State Economy

- ▶ Joblessness
- ▶ Decrease in NC industry, manufacturing and agriculture (particularly tobacco)
- ▶ State tax plan from the 1950s based upon a manufacturing and agricultural economy. We are now a service-oriented economy.
- ▶ Reduced payroll taxes, sales taxes, gasoline taxes, etc.
- ▶ Requirement to 'balance the budget' without borrowing.

How NCSHLA responded: Analysis of the Obstacles

- ▶ Accessibility to licensed SLPs/Auds
- ▶ Disbelief, lack of understanding
- ▶ Staggered awareness among licensed clinical staff
- ▶ "Healthcare is immune"
- ▶ Misunderstanding that 'this only affects people who bill Medicaid'
- ▶ Lack of awareness among related professionals, community leaders and elected legislators of 'what we do'

Action Plan

- ▶ Mobilize SLPs / Auds
- ▶ Provide information, education and strategic actions necessary
- ▶ Encourage responsiveness and distribution of critical info via ASHA and NCSHLA.
- ▶ Engage PR Professional to write and distribute Press Release to all media outlets
- ▶ Engage Attorney to research viability of program elimination under Federal law
- ▶ Rally in Raleigh and Town Hall Meetings
- ▶ THOUSANDS of phone calls, visits, meetings and emails!



What was 'on the line'?

Who/What was really in jeopardy?

- EVERYTHING and EVERYONE**
In the profession, in our communities, in NC
- Private Practitioners
 - University Programs
 - Healthcare Settings
 - Clients
 - Communities
 - State of NC and JOBS in all settings

**Everyday Advocacy,
 Advocacy Everyday!**

What can you do in your community to educate, inform and create understanding of and respect for your profession and the services you provide?

- Everyday Opportunities - take them!**
- **INTERACTIONS WITH:**
 - Physicians and physician office staff
 - School personnel
 - Hospital and SNF administrators
 - Families, parents, caregivers
 - Physical Therapists & Occupational Therapists
 - Social Workers, DSS, Nurses
 - Daycare directors and staff
 - Early Intervention and Preschool evaluation/services

- Larger Audiences**
- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ State Advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Get to know your Legislators! ◦ Public Service Announcements ◦ Chamber of Commerce Groups & Mayors ◦ Community Healthcare Groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‣ National Advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Get to know your State Representatives and Senators! ◦ Follow the ASHA grassroots advocacy actions online |
|--|--|

- EVERY Month Should Be....Better Speech and Hearing Month!**
- **COMMIT:** Devote one hour each month to advocacy (over and above your everyday moments)
 - Send postcards
 - Call the local talk radio or TV station
 - Send a personal letter