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Legislative Update – Betsy Mitchell, Lobbyist

Fall Veto Session has begun. The purpose of the Veto Session is for the legislature to review any and all legislation vetoed by the Governor in 2009. It takes at least 3/5 of the legislators to vote to override a governor's veto message. The legislature can also take action on other pending legislation deemed vital. Dates for the 2009 Veto Session are:

First Week -- October 14, 15, 16
Second Week -- October 28, 29, 30

At the end of session in July it had been speculated that the legislature might consider an income tax increase during this Veto Session. It seems clear that no tax increases will be considered during these six days in Springfield.

It is also clear that the Arthritis Prevention, Control and Cure Act of 2005 will not be funded in 2009. In addition we already know that the budget in 2010 will be more difficult to craft. This means that the needs of organizations with the loudest voices will stand a better chance of being heard than those who remain quiet.

For this reason, NOW is the time to meet with your legislators in their district office. Contact your legislators today and make an appointment to meet with them to discuss the vital importance of funding arthritis. Tell your story. Let them know how arthritis impacts your daily life and the lives of so many people in Illinois. If you want additional talking points just contact us. Also, remember that many legislators are in full campaign mode and are very happy to meet with groups of people.

When legislators do not hear from you, they think that everything is fine in your world. Many budget and reform concerns as well as other medical issues will be addressed in the upcoming session beginning in January 2010 (just around the corner). Do not delay meeting with your legislators!

For more information, please contact Michele Pfeilschifter at mpfeilschifter@arthritis.org or (312) 372-2080 x 27.



Join us for an upcoming Exercise and Arthritis Workshop

Learn more about managing your arthritis pain at this informational program. Hear from a rheumatologist, physical therapist and exercise instructor on topics such as physical activity, joint protection and proper footwear. An introduction by the local legislator and an exercise demonstration are also part of the program.

To register, go to www.arthritis.org keyword Chicago.

Exercise and Arthritis Workshop with State Representatives Tom Cross and Kay Hatcher

Tuesday, November 10 from 9:30am – 11:30am (registration begins at 9:15am)
Oswego Senior Center
186 E. Washington
Oswego, IL 60543

****Please visit www.arthritis.org keyword Chicago for a listing of all Public Education Seminars****

Join us for an upcoming Jingle Bell Run/Walk

Come Jingle With Us! Put on your holiday colors and bells on your shoes for the Jingle Bell Run 5k Run/Walk.

Chicago and Suburbs: Register online at www.ChicagoJBR.org.

Greater Illinois: Register online at <http://www.arthritis.org/chapters/greater-illinois/jbr.php>

Save the Date – Upcoming Advocacy Summit in Washington, DC!

Join the Arthritis Foundation and close to 400 advocates in Washington, DC this Spring. The 2010 Advocacy Summit will be held March 1 – 3. More information can be found at www.arthritis.org/advocacy.





Arthritis Ambassador Program

As a reminder, we are still looking for Arthritis Foundation advocates to become Ambassadors. You can now register to become an Arthritis Ambassador online. Go to: <http://afambassador.kintera.org/>.

Are You An Arthritis Ambassador? It is our goal to have an Ambassador in each Congressional District. Here in Illinois, we have 19 Districts. As of October 19, 2009, we have 14 of the 19 Districts covered. Please consider becoming an Ambassador, especially if there are no Ambassadors in your District.

Current Status of Ambassadors in Illinois Districts WITH Ambassadors

District 1 – Rush
District 2 – Jackson, Jr
District 4 – Gutierrez
District 5 – Quigley
District 6 – Roskam
District 7 – Davis
District 8 – Bean
District 9 – Schakowsky
District 10 – Kirk
District 11 – Halvorson
District 13 – Biggert
District 14 – Foster
District 16 – Manzullo
District 17 – Hare

Districts WITHOUT Ambassadors

District 3 – Lipinski
District 12 – Costello
District 15 – Johnson
District 18 – Schock
District 19 – Shimkus

What is an Arthritis Ambassador?

- An Advocacy Network Advocate who will commit to at least one year of building a strong relationship with their Members of Congress and their staff.

Why become an Arthritis Ambassador?

- Ambassadors will have an opportunity to further engage and learn more about public policy and advocacy and become pivotal links to Members of Congress. It is the next critical step in raising awareness with policymakers that arthritis affects 46 million Americans and 300,000 children.
- The chance to connect monthly with others who have an enthusiasm for advocacy and to learn from each other's success.

Until Next Time...

Please contact Michele Pfeilschifter, Advocacy Coordinator for the Arthritis Foundation Chapters in Illinois, at mpfeilschifter@arthritis.org or (312) 372-2080 x 27 if you have any questions or need more information.