

## Upcoming Grassroots Activities

### Facility Visits

Congress goes into recess for their district work period for the entire month of August. Currently, the ACRa Grassroots Program is looking for volunteers to schedule facility visits with their members of Congress during this time period.

These visits offer members of Congress a unique opportunity to learn firsthand how an imaging facility operates and hopefully will make them more knowledgeable about the challenges radiologists face on a daily basis.

### Letter Writing Campaign

The ACRa Grassroots Program will soon be reaching out to you to participate in a

letter writing campaign to your Representative. The idea is to have as many radiologists in a practice sign a letter addressed to their Representative asking for support in the delay of implementation of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. This letter will be sent via e-mail in the coming weeks and also will be made available on the ACRa's Grassroots Web site.

If you are interested in participating in the facility visit program or the letter writing campaign, please contact either Ted Burnes (tburnes@acr.org) or Melody Ballesteros (mballesteros@acr.org). ♦

## Hot Issue

# Radiologist Assistant

The radiologist assistant (RA) is an advanced-level radiologic technologist who works under the direct supervision of a radiologist to enhance patient care by assisting the radiologist in a diagnostic imaging environment.

RAs are equipped with the skills and knowledge to perform a number of procedures and may provide observations on medical images that they have taken to their supervising radiologist. They do not interpret medical images. The RA is a graduate of an academic program (baccalaureate or higher) that teaches a RA curriculum endorsed by the ACR and the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT). Graduates of these programs are allowed to sit for the RA certification examination administered by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT).

State legislative and regulatory activity continues regarding establishment of the

RA. State radiological societies continue to be at the forefront in working with the ACR on this issue. Tennessee, Mississippi, and Florida have all passed RA laws. The Tennessee law allows the state medical board to define the scope of practice of the RA and requires that these rules must be consistent with guidelines adopted by the ACR, ASRT, and ARRT. The RA must be certified by the state board of medical examiners and certified and registered with the ARRT. Finally, it removes the term radiologist practitioner assistant (RPA) and replaces it with the designation of the radiologist assistant (RA). In Mississippi the ACR was successful in working with the Mississippi Radiological Society and the ASRT to pass RA legislation.

The Florida Radiological Society supported legislation that incorporates RAs into the Radiological Personnel Certification Act. The bill adds the RA to the Advisory Council on Radiation

Protection, a body that oversees the practice of radiology. It specifies education requirements and scope of practice for the RA.

The ACR does not recognize the RPA designation. The primary differences between a radiologist assistant and a radiology practitioner assistant lie in the educational curriculum, required degree and certification examination, and scope of practice.

The ACR continues to serve as a resource in this area by working with the state societies to pass meaningful RA legislation. For more information on the RA, please contact Ariel Gonzalez at (703) 715-3488 or at [agonzalez@acr.org](mailto:agonzalez@acr.org). ♦