

IIABW Lobbies Congress

IIABW members attended the Big “I” national legislative conference in Washington D.C. last month and lobbied on behalf of independent agents. We met personally with Senator Maria Cantwell and Reps. Derek Kilmer, Denny Heck, Dan Newhouse and Suzan DelBene. We also met with staff from the offices of Senator Patty Murray and Reps. Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Dave Reichert. IIABW’s delegation included: Kim

Krogh, IIABW President with Hub International, Lori Reed, IIABW President elect with Mitchell Reed & Schmitt, Sue Knobeloch, IIABW’s national board member with Association of Risk Managers, Anthony Gomes with Vertafore, and Daniel Holst with IIABW.

We discussed the following issues

Flood Insurance

The Big “I” strongly supports a reformed and modernized National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and asked our representatives to extend the NFIP prior to its September 30, 2017 expiration. We advocated for risk-based rates, updated mapping; increased use of private reinsurance; and additional mitigation. We also shared our support for allowing the private market to offer flood insurance as a complement to the NFIP (S. 1679 and H.R. 2901). The legislation enables a private insurance policy to satisfy the NFIP mandatory purchase requirement, and grants state regulators the ability to determine what is “acceptable” private flood insurance. This would enable customers to move smoothly between the private market and the NFIP without penalty.

Crop Insurance

The Federal Crop Insurance Program (FCIP) is the cornerstone of the farm safety net and is crucial to the economic security of rural America. Despite the success of this public-private partnership, the program continues to be in the bullseye for budget cuts, which the Big “I” opposes. We shared our association’s opposition to S. 2244 and H.R. 3973, which would result in cuts to agent commissions and would discourage farmers from purchasing adequate coverage for their farmland.

Health Care

The Affordable Care Act’s “Cadillac tax” assesses a damaging 40% tax on health plans that exceed a fixed annual cost. At the end of 2015, with Big “I” support, a two-year delay of the “Cadillac tax” was enacted to move the effective date of the tax from 2018 to 2020. The Big “I” continues to push for a full repeal of the middle-class tax. We also shared our association’s supports for excluding agent compensation from the Medical Loss Ratio formula in the Affordable Care Act. This encourages insurance companies to cut or eliminate agent commission and takes agents out of the delivery of health insurance (H.R. 815 and S. 1661).



Rep. Derek Kilmer



Rep. Suzan DelBene



Senator Maria Cantwell



Rep. Denny Heck

Insurance Regulatory Reform

We shared our association's strong support for the state regulation of insurance and our concern with federal encroachment into insurance regulation. As a result, we told our Congressional delegation about our support of H.R. 2141 and S. 1086, which would create procedural "checks" for federal officials in international insurance negotiations to ensure that our state-based system of regulation remains strong. The Big "I" also strongly supports the creation of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers, which will make it easier for agents to get licensed in multiple states once it has been implemented.

Department of Labor (DOL) Regulations

The Big "I" is concerned with new DOL overtime requirements for "white collar" workers under the Fair Labor Standards Act that will be overly burdensome for small businesses and supports S. 2707 and H.R. 4773 which would halt the proposal.



[Rep. Dan Newhouse](#)