

## Subcommittee Hearing on H.R. 608 Anticipated

Editorial Staff

Congressman Lane Evans (D-Illinois) recently announced that she anticipates a subcommittee hearing this year on H.R. 608, the bill that would authorize DCs to be commissioned as health care officers in the U.S. Armed Forces. In a letter to Rep. Evans, Congresswoman Beverly Byron (D-Maryland), chair of the Military Personnel and Compensation Committee, wrote "... there is clearly a new level of awareness concerning chiropractic issues within the Armed Services Committee and across Capitol Hill. For the first time, I believe that the political environment is conducive to a productive hearing on H.R. 608."

At the close of the first session of the 102 Congress, H.R. 608 had 51 cosponsors in the House; the Senate version of the bill S.68, introduced by Senator Strom Thurmond (R-South Carolina), had 14 cosponsors. Because of the growing support for this initiative, Congress will be obligated to seriously address the legislation.

The ACA's Government Relations staff notes that despite the growing congressional support, the Pentagon remains solidly opposed to the bill. Most observers believe that the bill's only chance for survival is by attaching it as an amendment to a larger piece of legislation, such as the Defense Authorization bill.

Staff members of both the ICA and ACA are lobbying for support. Rep. Evans met with ICA Executive Director Ronald Hendrickson, Government Relations Assistant Catherine Elliott, and Legislative Committee member Dr. Donald M. Hirsh on January 23rd. The ICA plans to continue its national letter-writing campaign to promote H.R. 608.

The ACA has met with Beverly Byron (D-Maryland), chairwoman of the House Military Personnel Subcommittee and Les Aspin (D-Wisconsin), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. A hearing on H.R. 608 before the Military Personnel Subcommittee could occur as early as March, according to the ACA, provided additional cosponsors from the Armed Services Committees come aboard.

The ACA is mailing "alert bulletins" to all association members in congressional districts with House Armed Services Committees members. The ACA is also collecting testimonials from DCs with military experience, and putting together a potential panel of chiropractic witnesses to testify in the event of a hearing.

FEBRUARY 1992