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Contact: Abby Vandegrift, Communications & Policy Coordinator

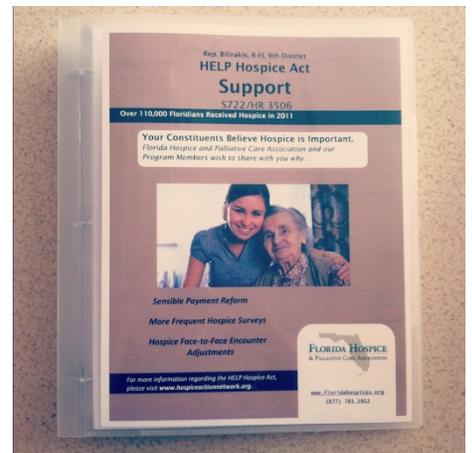
P: 850-878-2632 E: abby@floridahospices.org



Florida Hospice & Palliative Care Association Goes to D.C. to Advocate for Hospice

WASHINGTON, DC - This past Monday and Tuesday, delegates from around the country met in Washington D.C. for NHPCO's HAN Advocacy Intensive to advocate on behalf of hospice and NHPCO's legislation, The HELP Hospice Act. Eight hospice programs from Florida, comprised of employees from Covenant Hospice, Heartland Hospice, Hope Healthcare Services, Good Shepherd Hospice, LifePath Hospice, Tidewell Hospice, Suncoast Hospice, VITAS, and Florida Hospice & Palliative Care Association, were there to voice their support of hospice to Congress. "The goal of this advocacy intensive was to go to Congress and tell them hospice stories from the bedside perspective", said Paul Ledford, Executive Director of FHPCA. "It's always effective when you meet face-to-face with Congress and tell them personal impact hospice stories from their own constituents."

Florida decided to take telling hospice stories to Congress a step further by presenting each Florida member with a Hospice Advocacy Notebook. These notebooks were comprised of letters of support for hospice from constituents within each district, from various hospice programs all around the state. The citizens writing these letters ranged from hospice workers, to volunteers, to families, all with a direct and personal experience with hospice. Ledford stated, "The look on the faces when we presented the notebooks was worth the trip. It was clear they valued having actual letters from constituents within their area."



Hospice programs that were not able to be in D.C. personally were able to still have a voice by sending their letters of support in the Hospice Advocacy Notebook. Fourteen hospice programs around the state of Florida participated in sending a total of 239 letters to Washington. The participating programs were; Avow Hospice, Big Bend Hospice, Catholic Hospice, Covenant Hospice, Florida Hospital HospiceCare, Good Shepherd Hospice, Gulfside Regional Hospice, Hope Healthcare Services, Hospice of Okeechobee, Hospice of Palm Beach County, HPH Hospice, LifePath Hospice, Tidewell Hospice, Treasure Coast Hospice, and Suncoast Hospice. To see samples of the letters sent to Washington, visit FHPCA's website at www.floridahospices.org. If you would like to learn more about The HELP Hospice Act, visit NHPCO's Hospice Action Network website at www.hospiceactionnetwork.org.

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Florida Hospice and Palliative Care Association (FHPCA) is a not-for-profit, IRS Section 501(c)(3) organization representing Florida's hospice programs. The mission of FHPCA is to assure excellence and access to hospice care, and advocate for the needs of those in the final phases of life.

Contact:

Website: www.floridahospices.org

Phone: 850.878.2632 Fax: 850.878.5688

Email: info@floridahospices.org