

# Advocacy Day 2009

Last month CALA members gathered at The Citizen Hotel in Sacramento to meet with Legislators and discuss current issues affecting the Assisted Living profession. This year, members advocated for a revision in the definition of bedridden, better arbitration agreement standards and also pushed for an increase in licensing inspection visits. Beginning with a briefing from CALA staff and lobbyist, attendees at this year's Advocacy Day learned about these important issues and the importance of getting the message heard.

Keynote speaker Allen Zaremborg, President and Chief Executive Officer of California Chamber of Commerce, shared his expertise and insight into the California political environment. Participants also had the opportunity to hear about other meetings, as well as let CALA staff know of any needed follow up. One attendee commented, "I am happy to do this (event) because it is always an eye opening experience – it is very clear that our voices need to be heard." Several attendees remarked on the success of Advocacy Day over the years and a noticeable difference in the knowledge and understanding of Assisted Living at the Capitol. This increased understanding of Assisted Living is in large part from the work you do, hosting legislative tours and attending events such as Advocacy Day – Congratulations!

While many first time attendees are often nervous about visiting with their legislators the response from those attendees was just as positive. One first time attendee told us, "This was my first experience at the Capitol – it was fabulous! I am looking forward to becoming much more involved." With CALA staff and lobbyists helping attendees with the current issues, and the informational materials that are handed out, most attendees feel well prepared for their meetings. "Advocacy Day helps me feel like a real part of an important process. I am not intimidated by it now – I was last year!"



1. Heather Harrison, Vice President of Public Policy talks with attendees during breakfast. 2. Attendees review briefing materials. 3. Attendees talk over breakfast. 4. Heather Harrison answers questions during the morning briefing. 5. Erin Levi, CALA lobbyist briefs attendees on important issues. 6. Attendees meet with legislative staff at the capitol. 7. Attendees meet with Senator Leland Yee. 8. Attendees meet with Assembly Member Wes Chesley. 9. Allen Zaremborg discusses labor issues in the afternoon debriefing session.