



NWDA Moves in a New Direction with Educational Seminar and Washington “Fly-In”

On April 23, 2009, over two-dozen NWDA members went to our nation’s capital to participate in NWDA’s Spring Educational Seminar and Washington “Fly-In.” Members came to get their questions answered about the ENERGY STAR criteria revisions and to speak with legislative representatives on the current requirements of the .30/.30 tax credit for homeowners installing energy-efficient windows and doors established by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Members left feeling empowered and excited about the impact that NWDA can have on the future of the industry.

The federal economic stimulus package has sparked debate in the window and door industry and prompted NWDA to test new waters for the association. The industry is in the spotlight for the first time since the weatherization projects of the 1970s, and NWDA is taking advantage of this opportunity to promote its members’ interests. The federal government is recognizing that windows are part of the nation’s energy solution and that’s going to have a positive impact on sales and help the industry at large.

The Educational Seminar kicked off with a presentation on the ENERGY STAR criteria-revision process by program manager Richard Karney followed by a presentation from Tara Smith, Director of Public Affairs at the National Association of Manufacturers, on how to make the most of your meetings with legislators.

Following the Educational Seminar, members headed to Capitol Hill where they met with a variety of representatives and staffers from the Senate and House, including Patrick Woodcock, the Legislative Aide to Senator Olympia Snowe (R-Maine), the author of the .30/.30 criteria for door and window tax credits provided for in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

NWDA Past-President (1997-99) John Mesko was in attendance and was pleased with the direction that he sees NWDA heading in. “This is one of the best things the NWDA Board has done. This is our livelihood and

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having input and dialog with legislative representatives is the kind of action we need to take. We met at the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and a NAM representative explained to us that we would likely be meeting with some legislative staff members, not the legislators themselves, but that this is critical to building a rapport with the office. I was a little skeptical on this, but when I went to the office of Senator Casey of Pennsylvania, I had an opportunity to meet with his Tax Legislative Aide and I was truly impressed with the knowledge that this young woman possessed. I was even more impressed with Patrick Woodcock of Senator Snowe’s office, who knew the .30/.30 issue inside and out, and if I didn’t know better (because of his age) I would have thought that he was a 30-year veteran of the window industry.”



The “Fly-In” drew participants from a cross-section of the industry, and helped to bring a critical mass of people trying to make a difference to Washington. Members walked away from the day feeling incredibly positive and, among other things, like they had really opened up a dialogue with Senator Snowe’s office for NWDA.