

2008 House of Delegates Report

The Spring 2008 House of Delegate (HOD) was in New York City and the Fall 2008 HOD at the Santa Ana Pueblo (between Albuquerque and Santa Fe), NM. Full descriptions of the Spring 2008 HOD resolutions, minutes, and ACOEM officers' addresses are available on the ACOEM website. Full descriptions of the Fall 2008 HOD resolutions are posted on the ACOEM website, but minutes and transcription of ACOEM officers' addresses will not be available until after December 2008. For more information, go the ACOEM website (<http://acoem.org/>), Member Center, Members' Only area, HOD page. Look for minutes and reports/resolutions.

New Format to the Fall House of Delegates.

ACOEM bylaws (Article XI, Section 3) specify that two HOD sessions will be held annually, one in the spring and one in the fall. These conferences were held in conjunction with the spring American Occupational Health Conference (AOHC) and the fall State of the Art Conference (SOTAC). As SOTAC has been discontinued, personal attendance at the Fall HOD is no longer required: telephone attendance for fall HOD sessions is now permitted.

The Fall 2008 HOD at the Tamaya Resort on the Santa Ana Pueblo in New Mexico had a teleconference link available and telephone participation. Forty delegates attended personally and by telephone, including. NECOEM delegates included Nelson Haas, MD who attended in person, and James McEleney, MD, who attended by telephone. David Egilman, MD, was the NECOEM alternate.

At spring HOD sessions, personal attendance is required for delegates. The length of the spring HOD sessions are a full day.

Duration of Fall House of Delegates Sessions: Fall 2008 HOD Recessed and to Convene again before next ACOEM Board of Directors Meeting in January 2009; HOD Minutes.

The duration of the fall HOD sessions until 2008 was one-half day. The scheduled date and time for the Fall 2008 HOD session was November 7 and two hours. HOD officers gave short addresses to the delegates. Four of 12 pending resolutions were considered. Eight resolutions were not considered in the allotted time.

As the business of the Fall 2008 HOD was incomplete, the session was recessed and will be scheduled to reconvene some time before the next ACOEM Board of Directors (BOD) meeting, which is in January 2009. The minutes for the Fall HOD 2008 will be posted approximately one month after the session is adjourned.

Below are my brief notes from the officers' addresses from Fall 2008, and my logs of HOD resolutions from Fall 2008 (Tables A through C). The logs include the resolutions' codes and names, motions considered (accept, reject, or table) with regard to the resolutions, the majority action of the HOD (House Action), and votes of the NECOEM delegates (NH and JM).

Comments of ACOEM President, Robert Orford, MD.

Dr. Orford discussed the function of the ACOEM HOD and BOD.

The HOD:

- allows for meetings of members of different ACOEM Components and Sections;
- provides a forum for work among members of ACOEM Components and Sections;
- cultivates ACOEM leadership with HOD leadership (for example, the Speaker) frequently serving as ACOEM Board members.

The BOD is the ACOEM governing body.

According to Dr. Orford, the HOD "bridges the gap" between ACOEM's components and its governing body. This is because any ACOEM geographic component or professional-interest section with over 50 members is allowed at least one delegate in the House, whereas the Board is not as large, and cannot include representatives of and is not representative of all components and sections.

Comments of ACOEM HOD Speaker, James Tacci, MD.

Dr. Tacci mentioned the possibility of future fall HOD meetings taking place in conjunction with meetings of ACOEM geographic components and/or at ACOEM headquarters. The Education and Conferences Working Group will explore the logistics of HOD/component meetings.

Comments of ACOEM Executive Director, Barry Eisenberg, CAE.

ACOEM and its members are facing challenges as an organization and as individuals. The expenses associated with continuing medical education (CME) continue to rise, and attendance at conferences and seminars continues to decline. As an example of rising expenses, ACOEM recently had a charge from a CME accreditation organization of \$7,000 that was

never assessed to ACOEM in the past. Fewer components are willing to support CME, and although membership renewal is good (25% of 2008 ACOEM members have already renewed their membership for 2009), overall membership continues to decline. However, ACOEM's expenditures have been within its budget.

Comments of ACOEM Treasurer, Karl Auerbach, MD.

Overall, the finances of ACOEM are sound, but due to the financial market declines of the last several months, ACOEM financial reserves fell 25 to 30%. In addition to ACOEM's usual sources of revenue that includes membership dues, conferences and seminar fees, and sales of publications, ACOEM has a new on-line store that will hopefully provide another source of income to the organization.

House of Delegates Resolutions.

Resolutions with dashes in the action boxes had action delayed until the Fall 2008 HOD session is reconvened. As stated above, action was taken of four resolutions. If any member has comments on the remaining resolutions, please feel free to contact NEOEM and submit your feedback.

Table A. Tabled Resolutions from Earlier Houses: Reconsidered in Fall 2008.

Fall 2008 Resolution Code (Former Code)	Resolution Name	Motion	House Action	NH	JM
08F-01-CS (08S-01-CS, 07F-01-CS)	Section responsibilities	to be covered after recess	_____	_____	_____
08F-02-EA (08S-04-EA)	Calling on the U.S. Congress to restructure the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976	to be covered after recess	_____	_____	_____
08F-03-EA (08S-06-EA)	Health insurance	to be covered after recess	_____	_____	_____

Table B. New Resolutions: Fall 2008.

Spring 2008 Resolution Code	Resolution Name	Motion	House Action	NH	JM
08F-04-CR	ACOEM Board of Directors voting members	Table	For	For	_____
08F-05-EC	House of Delegates organized meetings	Approve	For	For	For
08F-06-EC	Remote Attendance of HOD Meetings included as clause in Resolution 08F-05-EC	Withdrawn	_____	_____	_____
08F-07-SA	Practice Guidelines for nanoparticles	to be covered after recess	_____	_____	_____
08F-08-EC	Joint ACOEM/AAOHN conferences	Table	For	_____	Abstain
08F-09-EA/SA	Revision of the OSHA Lead Standard and guidance for physicians on occupational lead poisoning	to be covered after recess	_____	_____	_____
08F-10-EA	Policy platform on the place of occupational medicine in an era of health care reform	to be covered after recess	_____	_____	_____

Table C. Late Resolutions: Fall 2008.

Fall 2007 Resolution Code	Resolution Name	Motion	House Action	NH	JM
08F-11-SA	A resolution honoring Dr. Reynolds Bissenden for his year of service to the ACOEM HOD	Approve	For	For	_____
08F-12-XX	Digitization of ACOEM journal archives and participation in PubMed Central	to be covered after recess	_____	_____	_____

Notes.

All approved HOD resolutions are accepted as ACOEM positions and policies only if approved by the ACOEM Board of Directors.

The NECOEM BOD discussed support of Resolution 08F-02-EA and Resolution 08F-03-EA during its previous two meetings in June and October 2008.

08F-02-EA – Calling on the U.S. Congress to restructure the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976.

The sentiments of members of the NECOEM BOD was that they did not understand some of the provisions of the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976 (TSCA) and of Resolution 08F-02-EA, and wanted more information before supporting the resolution. The NECOEM BOD is willing to reconsider its support for Resolution 08F-02-EA if more information is provided and a better understanding is reached of the Resolution's provisions.

Better education concerning TSCA, its intent, implementation, and deficiencies, and its place among other federal laws may be an appropriate subject for future NECOEM meetings.

08F-03-EA –Health insurance.

Resolution 08F-03-EA calls for ACOEM to support universal access to health care through a national, single-payer health care plan. The NECOEM BOD unanimously supports access to health care for all people. However, there was no consensus among members of the BOD as to how we as a society should work toward universal access. Additionally, NECOEM BOD members felt that (1) as the primary concern of ACOEM is with workplace health and wellness, and resources of ACOEM and the efforts of ACOEM members as such ought to be directed specifically at workplace, as opposed to general societal, health and wellness issues; and (2) the pursuit of a program to assure universal access to health care would be more-appropriately undertaken through other organizations with goals of promoting general societal health (for example, the American Medical Association or American Public Health Associations). Thus, the NECOEM BOD does not support Resolution 08F-03-EA.

08F-08-EC – Joint ACOEM/AAOHN Conferences.

Resolutions 08F-08-EC directs the ACOEM leadership to explore the resumption of a joint conferences between ACOEM and AAOHN. ACOEM and AAOHN supported jointly the AOHC until approximately three years ago when the leadership of the AAOHN at that time wanted a change in the arrangement that ACOEM was not able to accommodate. Since discontinuation of the jointly-sponsored AOHC, members of the ACOEM and AAOHN leadership have periodically discussed resumption of joint conferences, but no grounds for resumption have been evident. At the Fall 2008 HOD, there was support for good relations between ACOEM and AAOHN, however, as contact between ACOEM and AAOHN leadership has been occurring and there may not be grounds for resumption of joint conferences, resolution 08F-08-EC may not be approved, but not for lack of want of good will between ACOEM and AAOHN among HOD members.

08F-12-XX – Digitization of ACOEM journal archives and participation in PubMed Central.

Digitization of ACOEM journal archives and participation in PubMed Central may incur substantial expense and may mean the loss of revenue for ACOEM from exclusive copyrights. Resolution 08F-12-XX is not likely to be adopted and may be withdrawn by its author.

ACOEM 2009 Conferences.

AOHC 2009 will be held from April 26 to 29, 2009 in San Diego, CA. The format and location of a fall 2009 conference is under consideration.

2009 HOD Recorder.

Daniel Janiega of Central States and Babesh "Bob" Pandya of Western were nominated for the 2009 HOD Recorder, Dr. Janiega was elected.

Call to NECOEM Members for Input.

Those of us who serve NECOEM as delegates encourage and request NECOEM members submit resolutions that we can consider bringing before the HOD, particularly resolution covering items of concern to NECOEM members and pertaining to occupational and environmental health issues in New England.

Respectfully submitted by Nelson S. Haas, MD, MPH, FACOEM on November 16, 2008.

Acronyms.

AAOHN – American Association of Occupational Health Nurses
ACOEM – American College of Occupational and Environmental
Medicine
AOHC – American Occupational Health Conference
BOD – Board of Directors
CP – Clinic Practice working group of the HOD
CS – Components and Sections working group of the HOD
CR – Credentials working group of the HOD

EA – External Affairs working group of the HOD
EC – Education and Conferences working group of the HOD
HOD – House of Delegates
IA – Internal Affairs working group of the HOD
MB – Members working group of the HOD
NECOEM – New England College of Occupational and
Environmental Medicine
SA – Scientific Affairs working group of the HOD
SOTAC – State of the Art Conference