

## ***“Greeks Go to Congress”***

Collaborative effort between NIC (North-America Interfraternity Conference) and NPC (National Panhellenic Conference)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional visit was in 2002
- Individual Congressional visits were over 400 last April 2007

Leadership has been working together to build a positive presence in Washington that helps improve the fraternal experience we offer to our members.

We have established ourselves and can be better position to “take on” emerging issues challenging the Greek Community:

- Fire Safety
- Single Sex freedom of association  
Alpha Epsilon Pi v. City University of New York (College of Staten Island) 2<sup>nd</sup> Court of Appeals vacation the District Courts preliminary injunction

The visits to Congress have also been a wonderful way to expose our collegiate leadership to the political process and engaging them in these visits. They have been extremely effective in gaining support for the legislation.

## **Capital Fraternal Caucus**

- Formed in 2002 to develop & maintain a Greek presence in DC
- Maintains information about legislative initiatives in Congress that affect Greek Live and provides tools for expression of the fraternity and sorority agenda in DC
- The website [www.fraternalcaucus.org](http://www.fraternalcaucus.org) provides valuable information on the agenda items being promoted.
  - Vehicle to write directly to your own Senator and Congressional Representative
  - Helps you get involved as a Greek



## **Fraternity and Sorority Political Action Committee's (FSPAC) Purpose and Goals**

For the past few years, fraternity and sorority leaders have been working together to build a positive presence in Washington that helps improve the fraternal experience we offer to our members.

A logical extension of those efforts is the Fraternity and Sorority PAC, which seeks to provide financial aid to the campaigns of federal office candidates (House, Senate, and President) who support the objectives of fraternity life. The development of the Fraternity/Sorority PAC allows Greeks to work together to visibly support the opportunities to improve the experience we provide for our student members.

Formed on March 1, 2005, the "FSPAC" allows Greeks to work together to visibly support opportunities to improve the experience we provide for our student members. The PAC is already the nation's largest PAC focused solely on higher education issues.

## **What Issues Does FSPAC Care About?**

FSPAC's primary objective is to support the election of fraternity/sorority members to federal office so long as those members are supportive of the fraternal experience.

FSPAC will also support the election of others who have a track record of supporting policy initiatives that preserve and improve the potential for fraternal organizations to succeed.

Specific policy issues that FSPAC will use to evaluate candidates may include (but not be limited to):

- Support of changes to the federal tax code that promote charitable giving or create parity between the tax status of charitable contributions made to benefit fraternity members and other students.
- Support of freedom of association rights for students to join fraternal organizations while in colleges and universities.
- Support of initiatives to improve student housing and safety on college campuses.
- Support of initiatives to eradicate hazing and other mistreatment of college students.
- Support of initiatives to improve funding for student loans and other financial aid options.



## **Reasons to Give**

FSPAC provides an opportunity for Greeks everywhere to become more politically active so that we can support candidates for office who advocate policies that improve the experience we offer to our members.

Giving financial support to our allies in Congress helps ensure that we continue to have such allies in the future.

The FSPAC has a website at [fratpac.org](http://fratpac.org) which can be used to make donations to the cause of promoting the Greek agenda in Congress.

## **FSPAC Distributions to Political Candidates**

The FSPAC's Board of Directors meets regularly to approve contributions to individual candidates. The Board uses a checklist of questions in determining which candidates to support. By law, the FSPAC is allowed to contribute up to \$10,000 total to the election campaign of a single federal candidate (\$5,000 for the primary campaign and \$5,000 for the general election).

The FSPAC is bipartisan in distributing funding, though in the last election cycle we distributed approximately 73% of our funding to Republican candidates. This funding breakdown reflected four facts:

1. Republicans controlled both chambers of Congress;
  2. more than twice as many Greeks in Congress are Republican than Democrats;
  3. most of the PAC's donors to date who list a political affiliation are Republican; and
  4. Republicans are currently more supportive of the PAC's policy objectives.
- With the Democrats in control of both chambers of Congress, the PAC's contributions will be more balanced between the parties this cycle.

The PAC contributes to Greeks and non-Greeks. Candidates must have a demonstrated record of support for Greek policy causes or be involved with committees with jurisdiction over issues of concern to Greeks. For Senate candidates, we will focus most of our attention on supporting candidates who are up for reelection in 2008, as opposed to those candidates who are not running again until 2010 or 2012. While the PAC will spend most of its funding in the first 18 months of the election cycle, we will reserve some of its funding for distribution in the summer and fall of 2008 to Greeks running for Congress for the first time.

## **SUMMARY of WHERE to CONTRIBUTE**

The PAC has a website [www.fratpac.org](http://www.fratpac.org) where you can contribute on line with a credit card.

For those who wish to write a check this can be written to:

Fraternity & Sorority PAC  
PO Box 50731  
Washington, DC 20091-07321

## **Fire Safety Legislation History**

### **HR 643/S638 Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act of 2007**

This bill will allow contributions made to Greek organizations and other membership driven groups to be tax deductible when used for physical plant improvements.

Status: 167 House Co-sponsors and 34 Senate Sponsors still trying to find a bill to attach to for 2007.

#### **Support of the Bill:**

Growing Population of College Students need safe, modern & affordable housing.

- Congress is very interested in making college more affordable Greek housing is a Key Source of Collegiate Housing with over \$250,000 students each year in over 8,000 facilities.
- Collegiate Housing Capacity and Safety need to be upgraded.
- Equitable tax treatment for a landlord who has the same service as a university/college.
- Private solution to the issue without asking for public money
- Current monies donated to Greek Foundation can only be used for educational leadership and philanthropic programs, resources and scholarships.

#### **Act Would Encourage:**

New charitable contributions to improve current collegiate housing, thereby preserving and upgrading existing housing capacity needed to accommodate rapidly growing student populations.

Result in safer student housing by enabling fraternities and sororities to fund the installation of modern life safety equipment, such as fire sprinklers, smoke detectors and alarm systems.

This bill is crucial to the future of our Greek organizations with property that is aging, volunteers willing to make tax deductible donations and the increased pressure to install sprinkler systems in Greek housing.

#### **Other Legislation:**

##### **HR 642 College Prevention Act**

This bill will provide \$100 million a year for five years in matching grants for the installation of fire suspension and detection systems in residence halls, fraternities and sororities.

Status: Very little support as it is a spending bill.

##### **S 582 Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act**

This bill will amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to classify automatic fire sprinkler systems as 5 year property for purposes of depreciation.

Status: Fire Safety "industry" supports this; however, it is getting little to no traction in Congress.

**HR 592/5354 Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act**

This bill calls upon colleges, universities, fraternities and sororities to make fire safety information about their buildings publicly available and report it to the US Department of Education on an Annual basis.

Status: The bill has passed both houses.

**HR 95 Campus Fire Safety Month**

This bill will recognize September as Campus Fire Safety Month.

Status: Passed in both houses and September 2007 it was implemented.