

## 2013 IFMA Advocacy Day

Why would a facility manager go all the way to Washington DC to have meetings with Congressmen that are not from their district or state? Can't any conversations be done via snail mail, an e-mail or the telephone? The answer is yes to all three. But being face-to-face with the lawmakers and their aides, gives me a voice. I had the chance to represent each of you during the 2013 IFMA Advocacy Day.

This year the advocacy efforts of IFMA focus on supporting a Property Realignment Act (PRA). This bipartisan legislation would require our government to look at its own real estate portfolio, 8300 buildings in the U.S., which are owned or leased, to determine which can be consolidated, sold to private industry, etc. The reduction in wasted space, efficiencies in building systems, reduced O&M budgets are money savers. Can any of you imagine being allowed to move occupants into one floor of a vacant, 10 story high-rise when you have an empty floor two blocks away? Private industry regularly makes a case for realigning property to meet its business objectives.

There are two bills in the House and one in the Senate that provide various suggestions on how to use part of the savings from the PRA to fund the Federal Building Personnel Training Act. This act, vote into law in 2010, requires the government to set standards for facility employees and provide funds for training these government employees. As with private businesses, don't we believe trained facility managers, those with credentials like those offered through IFMA, should be managing our governments' real estate portfolio? Training of government facility staff, not only makes sense today, but creates opportunities for using their knowledge to implement energy efficiencies, create reduction in waste and developing building longevity.

Locally, we are our legislator's resource when it comes to showing them how government can learn from private industry facility managers. They beg for knowledge and we fortunate to have two IFMA employees in Washington walking the halls on our behalf.

I would like to extend an invitation to any member to email me if they are interested in learning more about what they can do locally or while in Washington. If there is interest in meeting with State officials, I will be happy to organize an event for the Chapter. Please contact me to discuss your interests or to hear about my experience from the 8th Annual Public Policy Forum in Washington.

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