



# CA and the Self-Employed

## More Than 30 Years of Achievements

Founded by Milt Smedsrud, the organization sought to promote the general health, welfare and advancement of people in agriculture or small business. The following are some of CA's many successes in the years since.

### Small-Business and Tax Issues

- 1989** CA was successful in urging Congress to retain the 25 percent deduction for the self-employed paying their own health premiums.
- 1996** CA testified before the House Ways and Means Committee supporting medical savings accounts, which were enacted into law later that year.
- 1997** CA was successful in helping to pass legislation that restored the home office deduction and phased in 100 percent deductions for health premiums paid by the self-employed.
- 1998** CA sponsored a House Small Business Committee Breakfast in Washington, D.C.
- 2001** CA achieved one of its longtime tax reform goals when Congress approved an elimination of estate taxes.
- 2002** CA participated in a joint House and Senate Small-Business Roundtable. CA was successful in helping pass an increase in Section 179 expensing.
- 2003** CA achieved tax reform goal of increasing Section 179 expensing to \$100,000.
- 2004** CA helped get legislation signed into law extending increases in section 179 expensing to 2007.
- 2005** CA worked with other groups to extend tax incentives for another year.
- 2006** CA helped get several tax extenders passed along with an Alternative Minimum Tax fix for one more year.
- 2007** CA presented at the IRS small business roundtable in D.C., talking about the importance of tax policy for small business.
- 2008** CA joined a task force that meets with the House Small Business Committee.

### State Health High-Risk Pools

- 1977** CA began working on state risk pool programs for those unable to purchase insurance coverage because of pre-existing medical conditions.
- 1992** CA hosted the first "National Conference on State Risk Pools for the Medically Uninsurable."
- 1999** CA testified before state legislative committees in Kansas, Arizona and Massachusetts.
- 2002** CA testified in support of partial federal funding for risk pools and was instrumental in getting funding signed into law.  
  
CA was the founding member of the Health Safety Net Coalition to help high-risk pools.
- 2003** CA was the key player in getting legislation introduced in the House, expanding federal funding for high-risk pools.
- 2004** CA was a leader in getting legislation introduced in the Senate expanding federal funding for high-risk pools.
- 2005** CA led the effort that got partial federal funding for high-risk pools signed into law.
- 2006** CA got partial federal funding of high-risk pools extended for five more years.
- 2007** CA helped get legislation passed in North Carolina authorizing a high-risk pool to help address the problems of the medically uninsurables in that state.
- 2008** CA met with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to support continued federal funding for state high-risk pools.

### Health Care Issues

- 1974** CA testified before the House Ways and Means Committee about problems with health insurance companies canceling rural people after they have been seriously ill.

- 1989** CA began a national grassroots campaign to raise awareness and generate support for changes in the American health care system.
- 1999** CA launched and led the Health Tax Deduction Alliance, a coalition of 33 national organizations working for a 100 percent tax deduction for health insurance premiums for self-employed people.
- 2000** CA launched the "American Campaign for Consumer Choice and Lower Health Care Costs," starting a nationwide long-term effort.
- 2002** CA testified in the House of Representatives supporting refundable tax credits to help people purchase health insurance.  
  
CA helped pass legislation that offers health insurance credits to displaced workers.
- 2003** CA was a leader in securing passage of health savings accounts (HSAs) which expand medical savings accounts (MSAs).
- 2004** CA helped get two bills introduced granting 100 percent tax deduction for every individual paying for their own health insurance.
- 2005** CA led the effort that got partial federal funding for high-risk pools signed into law.
- 2006** CA was a leader in getting important HSA enhancements passed and signed into law.
- 2007** CA was a leader in getting HSA contribution limits raised.
- 2008** CA met with health care experts from both the Obama and McCain campaigns to outline CA's position on health care.

### Seniors Issues

- 1987** CA aided rural seniors by filing a class-action lawsuit against two of the nation's largest Medicare HMOs after they discontinued coverage for 11,500 senior citizen subscribers.
- 1988** CA testified at a Senate Committee on Aging hearing regarding "the rural health care challenge."
- 1995** CA led rural groups fighting for Medicare reform that improves reimbursement for rural providers and preserves Medicare.
- 2000** CA helped enact legislation that eliminates the Social Security earnings limit.
- 2002** CA worked on establishing a viable prescription drug benefit for seniors.
- 2003** CA played an important role in passing the Medicare Improvement Act, establishing a prescription drug program for seniors and adding \$25 billion for rural hospitals and other providers.
- 2005** Medicare Part D drug plans were offered with CA involved in the planning of new products.
- 2006** CA established a new agreement with John Hancock Insurance to offer 10 percent discount for long-term care insurance for CA members.

### Scholarships

- 1973** CA presented its first scholarship to a rural youth entering college.
- 1991** CA reached the \$1 million mark in scholarships awarded to youth preparing for rural careers.
- 1995** CA presented the first scholarships for outbound exchange program participants.
- 2000** CA presented \$20,000 in scholarships to high school age, vocational agriculture students from 10 communities.
- 2002** CA awarded close to \$50,000 in scholarship dollars to students studying agriculture and/or small business.
- 2006** CA awarded a scholarship to the daughter of CA Platinum members and a student at the University of Minnesota.
- 2008** The CA Foundation received of \$1,500 donation to help fund its CAEP work.

### Exchange Program

- 1985** CA formed its own international agriculture exchange program. Within 10 years, the program grew to become the largest of its kind in the United States.
- 1990** CA began the first United States and Soviet ag exchange program.
- 1993** The CA Foundation awarded full grants to 10 young people participating in an EU exchange program.
- 1996** A benchmark was reached by hosting more than 500 young people, from 32 countries. CA also constructed a new Internet site that allows young people anywhere in the world to find out more about international exchange programs. CA pushed for local Internet access for rural areas throughout the country.
- 1997** The CA Foundation raised funds and provided grants to send 17 young rural Americans on the CA international exchange to Europe.
- 2000** The CA International Exchange Program had almost 1,000 participants from more than 40 countries.
- 2002** The CA International Exchange Program had more than 1,100 participants from 43 countries training in the United States.
- 2003** CA International Exchange Program added new program in turf management.
- 2004** The Exchange Program had trainees from more than 50 countries, one of the largest global representations in the history of the program.
- 2005** CA worked with 50 other groups to successfully increase the number of H2B Visas.
- 2006** CA completed first of three-year horticulture apprentice program in Minnesota and expanded apprentice program to wineries in California.
- 2007** CA received the first Agriculture Apprenticeship designation granted by the U.S. Department of Labor.

### Agriculture Policy

- 1980** CA was instrumental in getting the first beginning-farmer loan program passed in Iowa.
- 1985** CA assisted in the start-up of the National Council of State Ag Finance Programs.
- 1996** CA fought successfully to save funding for the Farm Mediation Programs, serving 19 states, that were slated to be abolished in the 1997 federal budget.
- 1999** In response to the national farm crisis of 1998, due to unprecedented low farm prices, CA launched the national "Campaign for Family Agriculture" to re-establish a farm income safety net.
- 2000** CA was involved in the crop insurance reform legislation that was signed into law.
- 2001** CA testified before Congress for tax incentives for value-added agriculture enterprises to expand rural jobs and farm income.
- 2002** New six-year Farm Bill was passed, including a CA-backed section with important improvements for beginning farmers.
- 2004** CA led the way on introduction of legislation improving the beginning farmer loan program.
- 2005** CA led a coalition to get the Agricultural Board Improvement Act of 2005 introduced in the House with 15 co-sponsors.
- 2006** CA issued first farmer and sportsman survey to help CA's efforts in walk-in hunting programs.
- 2007** CA was leader in getting HR 3817 introduced in Congress, helping beginning farmer loan programs.
- 2008** CA helped to add two long-needed changes in the Aggie Bond program section of the 2008 Farm Bill enacted into law.