I love studying history. I am in heaven when visiting a museum or read about a new historical discovery. When Robert Ballard and Jean-Louis Michel discovered the Titanic wreckage in 1985 I was fascinated! Most people know the story of the unsinkable luxury ship that hit an iceberg and actually sunk on its maiden voyage from England to New York. In 1912 the Titanic was the largest ship that had ever been built. The Titanic was 46,328 gross tonnages and pretty small compared to Royal Caribbean’s Symphony of the Seas which is 228,081 gross tonnages. Large ships are unable to change course quickly when something is in their path. The Titanic could not swerve to avoid the iceberg and sunk in two hours.

Do you sometimes think our government is like a large cruise ship-- slow to turn and change? Most of us took Civics at some point and we have seen Schoolhouse Rock’s “I’m Just a Bill” so we know that there is a process in governing and it can be very slow. At the NAHU Capital Conference in Washington last February, one of the activities was visiting with local House Representatives about issues and upcoming bills that affect our industry. We were discussing national surprise billing legislation, asking to uphold the employer exclusion of health insurance premiums from taxation and asking that COBRA be treated as credible coverage for participants who are over age 65. Shortly after those meetings COVID-19 hit our country and those discussions were preempted by other distractions. The issues that affect our business and clients did not go away with COVID and still need to be addressed.

The upcoming election will bring new members to the US House and they will need to be educated on our industry. The Texas legislature will meet in 2021. There will be a new Speaker of the House in Texas who is responsible for committee assignments. A new member means we need to be active in educating them on our industry. How do we as an association keep our interests in the minds of those that enact and write the regulations? We get our message out through involvement in the process and funding TAHUPAC and HUPAC. These political action committees allow us to band together and support candidates and legislators that have the power to introduce and pass legislation that is good for our clients and industry. A strong, well-funded PAC is the voice that we need to protect our industry and make known the issues our clients bring to us.

There are many interests in the healthcare industry and most of the PAC’s that represent healthcare providers in Texas are extremely well-funded. They are pouring money into legislators to have their voices heard and their wishes may not be good for our clients. This is a very important year for our industry. COVID has highlighted the issues with an employer based health insurance model. The Supreme Court may be ruling to end ACA. Large healthcare providers have suffered financially and will be looking at ways to offset those losses. Our clients have suffered loss of business and large increases in costs will further the suffering and add to the large number of uninsured in Texas. We have a duty to protect the interests of our clients. We need to have a stronger and loud voice by funding and support of TAHUPAC and HUPAC.

This year the DAHU Board is asking you to get off the dock and get in the boat. Being in the boat includes contributing to TAHUPAC and/or HUPAC. I am challenging every DAHU member to get in the boat and commit $25 a month to support our PACs. Please commit $12.50 per month to TAHUPAC and $12.50 per month to HUPAC. $300 a year per member is a very small price for a seat at the table. We must keep and grow our voices. The icebergs are out there and to keep our ship from sinking we must come together and support TAHUPAC and HUPAC. Please contribute- **TODAY**!