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SAF's Congressional Action Days addresses key industry issues in DC

By

Adam Campbell

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The Society of American Florists (SAF) hosted its [43rd annual Congressional Action Days](#) (CAD) on March 20-21, 2023 in Washington, DC. The event attracted more than 100 members of the floral industry from across the country, who met with their lawmakers and educated them on the issues that affect their businesses and the industry as a whole.

CAD was a two-day event that included an all-industry trends discussion and lunch, an issues briefing and advocacy training session, a congressional reception, and a day of visits to Capitol Hill offices. Participants learned how to talk about the key issues affecting the floral industry, such as labor shortages, immigration reform, trade policies, research funding, and environmental regulations. They also had the chance to network with their peers from different segments of the industry.

According to SAF Senior Lobbyist Dr. Joe Bischoff, CAD is a vital way to influence policy makers and raise awareness of the floral industry's contributions to the economy, society, and environment. "CAD is the most effective tool we have as an industry to communicate our message to Congress," he said. "It's also a great way to build relationships with your legislators and their staffs, who can be your allies on Capitol Hill."

SAF made it easy for members to participate in CAD by offering a streamlined event schedule that allowed them to fly in Monday morning and leave Tuesday afternoon. SAF also provided hotel accommodations at a discounted rate, transportation to and from the hotel and Capitol Hill, and materials and guidance for the congressional meetings. SAF encouraged members to register early as the hotel sold out quickly in the spring.

Jodi McShan, AAF, of McShan Florist in Dallas, Texas, was a veteran of CAD and attended again this year. She said CAD was a rewarding experience that helped her grow as a business owner and an industry leader. "Each year Congressional Action Days brings something new — meeting new [legislators], learning about different aspects of the industry and the new issues that are brought to light," she said. "It's also a great way to connect with other florists and share ideas and best practices."

Photo: Nicole Palazzo of City Line Florist Inc and Stephanie Brady of Society of American Florists

