



# CAPITOL CITY SPEAKERS BUREAU

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## Joel Blackwell

*Travels from:* California

*Fee Range:* \$2,500 - \$5,000

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Joel Blackwell worked for 14 years as a newspaper editor at the *Miami Herald* and *Charlotte Observer*. Tired of newspapers and hungry to find a way to participate in politics, he set out to help organizations carry their political messages to the public, politicians and press through consulting, keynote presentations, training sessions and seminars. He ran for the state legislature in North Carolina, and that experience taught him about the love affair between voters and politicians, which resulted in the book, *Keep on Voting After the Election*.

Known around the country as "The Grass Roots Guy," Joel Blackwell speaks to groups of ordinary people who come together in a state capital or Washington DC to lobby. He creates educational videos, DVDs and web content that helps people understand what actions they must take to influence political outcomes.

He conducted focus groups in nine states asking association members, corporate executives, and others why they don't write letters, make phone calls and give money to politicians. From this experience, he compiled the tips and techniques into *Keep On Voting*, which is designed to empower people to get what they want from state legislatures and the Congress.

Joel has worked for 25 years in 47 states and Washington DC helping people and organizations influence politicians and public policy. He's worked with associations and corporations to help them recruit, motivate and activate members to lobby. His keynotes, seminars, videos and books are based on research into why people do and don't get involved in legislative lobbying and what influences politicians.

In working with medical associations, medical specialty groups and medical staff organizations, he realized the key to political influence is to engage all the stakeholders by capitalizing on their unique strengths. Physicians have great respect, personal experience and passion. They often need support with organization and logistics to maximize their effectiveness. Sometimes they don't realize there are others around them who can carry the message of medicine to the political system.

Practice staff thus can play a critical role in several ways. They can prepare documents for physicians to sign, keeping the doctor on schedule and set the calendar for political contacts. Practice staff can communicate critical information about elements of the health care delivery system: billing, coding, office expenses and insurance issues. They are experts with high credibility. Polls consistently cite nurses among the most trusted professionals. When they speak about health care, everyone listens.

Joel's latest book, *Personal Political Power For Physicians And Medical Practice Managers*, advocates that physicians and staff work together to maximize their political and persuasive clout. Joel used his experience to find what politicians want from volunteer advocates and what they don't. He interviewed more than 500 elected officials, local, state and federal, asking them how they want to be influenced. This experience, culminated in this book, which is designed to empower physicians and staff to get what they want from state legislatures and the Congress.