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CONTACT: Kathryn Guccione
202-468-3801 (mobile)
kguccione@womeningovernment.org

**WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT HOSTS NATIONAL, ANNUAL MEETING FOR WOMEN
STATE LEGISLATORS, FOCUSED ON CRITICAL PUBLIC POLICY TOPICS**

Phoenix, Arizona --- January 8, 2008 --- Last week in Arizona, a national group of women state legislators gathered to discuss pressing public policy topics facing state legislatures today. Women In Government, a non-profit, bi-partisan organization representing women state legislators, convened the 14th Annual State Directors' Conference bringing together veteran women state legislators elected by their colleagues to serve as key contacts for their state with the organization. The State Directors' Conference offers an opportunity for state legislators to network with each other and learn from leading experts in varied fields such as healthcare and education.

Arizona Governor, Janet Napolitano, applauded the efforts of Women In Government, noting, "Women In Government has led the way in empowering and mobilizing all women legislators to effect sound policy."

Susan Gerard, Director of the Arizona Department of Health Services, attended the event, and added to Gov. Napolitano's comments by saying, "I am excited to see a group of dedicated women committed to improving the lives of our citizens, nationwide. As a former state legislator, I am proud to be a part of a group making a significant impact in public policy, particularly in the area of healthcare."

Women In Government is committed to promoting leadership among women state legislators, in part through networking opportunities and expert forums on important public policy issues in the states.

"We are honored to have prominent speakers across a variety of fields at our conferences, who will help advance our mission," said Susan Crosby, president of Women In Government.

A sample of expert speakers at the Conference included:

- Dr. Rajeev Venkayya, Former Special Assistant to the President for Biodefense and Senior Director for Biodefense at the White House Homeland Security Council
- Dr. Judith Monroe, Indiana State Health Commissioner and President-Elect, Association of State & Territorial Health Officials
- Travis Reindl, Program Director, Jobs for the Future
- Dr. Ruth Taylor-Piliae, Assistant Professor, University of Arizona College of Nursing, and Member, Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

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Topics discussed included pandemic influenza preparedness, access to higher education, cervical cancer prevention, emerging energy issues, and epilepsy, among others. In addition, past leaders of Women In Government were honored during an opening tribute dinner when new officers and state directors were sworn in.

“The Annual State Directors’ Conference is an excellent opportunity to honor those who have helped Women In Government become the premier organization it is today,” said State Rep. Karen Morgan (D-UT), chair of the Board of Directors of Women In Government.

The meeting also featured a “Go Red” For Women Luncheon to increase awareness about heart disease, the number one killer of men and women in the United States. Women In Government has been committed to this issue for a number of years, but more recently opened a Medicare Preventive Services Policy Resource Center and hosted a “Women and Heart Disease Task Force Meeting” to bring together policymakers and state agency representatives to focus on this deadly disease of women, and in particular, the health of older women. Participants of the conference recorded public services announcements to be aired in their home states for February, American Heart Month, sharing important tips for men and women to stay heart healthy; and received their own heart health screenings provided by a Maryland-based national, non-profit organization, The Sister to Sister Foundation.

About Women In Government

Women In Government is a national, 501(c)(3), non-profit, bi-partisan organization of women state legislators providing leadership opportunities, networking, expert forums and educational resources to address and resolve complex public policy issues. For more information, visit www.womeningovernment.org.

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