

Open Letter to NAHU

NAHU has assembled a task force to explore the *possibility* of a name change for the association. We emphasize the word "possibility" to make it clear that we are still in the earliest stages of consideration.

If it is decided that a name change is worthy of consideration, there are many questions to eventually answer. But, for now, there is one core question to ask.

Does our current name most accurately and effectively represent who we are, what we stand for, and whom we serve? Or, is it worth considering a name change to identify one that would serve us better?

Why consider a name change?

This is among the most significant considerations we could face as an association. Our name is part of our identity; it affects our growth and how others perceive us.

As we consider the possibility, it is important to not only think about the words that come together to create the name; we need to also focus on what we want, and need, the name to reflect.

We must ensure our name reflects our values, position in the world, what we offer, and even what drives us emotionally.

Our name must capture the essence of our brand. It must help others answer the "one question" they have of us: "Why would I want to be part of your association?"

Organizations, and the world in which they exist, change and evolve. We feel it is prudent to stop and reflect on whether we are offering a clear answer to this critical question.

Who are we?

Before thinking about any specific name, we need to reflect on the industry we serve. The only comment we will make about a specific new name is that it would not include the word "underwriter."

The benefits industry includes brokers/advisors serving group, individual, and Medicare markets. The industry also includes insurance carriers and a long list of solution providers. However, should we also be including HR professionals, attorneys, and others who also serve the benefits interest of employers as part of the industry our association serves?

Regardless of the final definition, our industry has perhaps the most significant impact on employers, their employees, and the dependents of those employees of any partner serving them. Collectively, we impact their businesses strategically, financially, operationally, and, because of our connection to their employees, emotionally. The industry makes a difference in the success of the clients we advise and in the quality of life of the families attached to those businesses.

Where do we fit into the industry? Our association:

- Affects legislation and regulation
- Provides a forum to discuss critical issues
- Develops industry leaders
- Creates an environment of collaboration
- Nurtures healthy discussions and debates
- Assembles resources on behalf of our members
- Offers a home for those who want to drive personal success while leaving a positive mark on those they serve

*We are **the** association making the biggest difference in an industry that makes a significant impact on the lives of millions of Americans.*

Who would be affected?

As we consider the possibility of a name change, there are many interested parties to think about.

Current members – How would a name change affect how they/we identify with the association?

Future members – How would the name/brand impact our ability to attract future members?

Legislators – Would a name change measurably affect (positively or negatively) our influence in DC and state capitols?

Affinity partners – Would those who support us financially see alignment in any different light?

Lots of moving pieces

If we eventually decide our name needs to be changed, there is a significant amount of work to be done. It isn't just the name of the national association that would be affected; so would our state and local chapters.

We would face significant expenditures of time and money. However, we also need to ask ourselves, "If a name change is needed, what would be the cost of *not* moving forward?"

Our commitment as a task force

We fully appreciate that this decision would affect all aspects of the association we love and serve. Regardless of your immediate reaction, we encourage you to keep an open mind, offer feedback, and participate in an open and healthy debate.

One of our first action items will be to host a virtual roundtable discussion to solicit input from our formal leaders. You are receiving this letter because you are one of those committed leaders.

We encourage you to attend the call, come with an open mind, and be prepared to answer the following question.

“Why do you believe a name change should/shouldn’t be given consideration?”

This is an issue sure to solicit emotional responses along the way. Remember, regardless of the “name on the door,” we are all part of the same team.

Respectfully submitted by Kevin Trokey on behalf of the NAHU Name Change Taskforce – Reid Rasmussen, Cathy Cooper, Scott Wham, Dave Sherrill, Patrick Burns, and Eric Kohlsdorf (Board of Trustees liaison)