



THE COPA CONNECTION

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE RICK CHAVEZ, CPO

As we forge ahead through troubled waters, I have made a personal commitment to making the California Orthotics and Prosthetics Association (COPA) a stronger and more recognized force in California. Taking forward over 20 years of organizational and legislative success, we face a future that will provide our profession with countless opportunities to impact change and shape our profession and our business' bottom lines for decades.

Where many may forecast gloom and doom in California, COPA is preparing to reach new goals that will lead to greater financial security for businesses and increased recognition for practitioners. Our aim to unify the business of O&P will be a major facet of this year's legislative strategy and marketing program.

As we face a battle for licensure, a need to reverse years of neglect for our public fee schedules, and a drastic call to turn the tide of

an eroding work force, we will need the strength of all those who work and study in our profession. To begin that process, I am cordially inviting all businesses and individual practitioners to become members of COPA today.

There has never been a more important time for you to consider COPA membership. From the dismantling of the health care system, to unfair corporate bargaining, competition from unqualified "company reps", cuts in publicly financed care, selective reimbursement, unfair UR decisions, delayed reimbursement, retroactive downgrading, denials for replacement parts, and the potential collapse of PT, OT, and P&O boundaries of practice, the threats are many. We will all need to stand firmly together to forge a competitive future for our profession.

One of the many focuses for COPA this year will be instituting educational



seminars for O&P providers. For example, the COPA board is considering two such one-day seminars. One of these seminars would be held in Northern California and the other in Southern California.

I urge you to join the only organization that speaks directly for California practitioners and businesses.

Thank you,
Rick Chavez, CPO

UNDER THE DOME

BRYCE W.A. DOCHERTY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/LOBBYIST



IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MONEY -

IT'S ABOUT THE MONEY!

COPA has been actively involved this year fighting the 10% Medi-Cal provider rate cut. This was proposed by Governor Schwarzenegger in January and delayed implementation of that cut

was recently adopted by the Legislature for the current fiscal year. COPA is now fighting to reverse that cut and also stop the Legislature from implementing a similar cut for the upcoming fiscal

BOARD MEMBERS

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*Marketing and Public Policy
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UNDER THE DOME, CONTINUED

year budget. In doing so, COPA is a proud member of the *Alliance for Patient Care (APC)* coalition (www.allianceforpatientcare.org), which is a coalition of over 100 organizations dedicated to protecting and improving access to health care for seniors, children, families, and persons with disabilities in the Medi-Cal program.

COPA President Rick Chavez, CPO, described the impact of these cuts on the APC website in these terms: *"Without at least rejecting the proposed Medi-Cal provider cut, vulnerable patients may continue to suffer from substantial and lasting disabilities. These patients, many of whom are amputees, will struggle to achieve proper use and maintenance of worn out and defective O&P devices, increasing the likelihood of chronic disability and injury."*

The logic surrounding these budget cuts has been characterized as misguided by the APC

coalition. Medi-Cal rates have remained stagnant in California for 20 years and are among the lowest in the nation. There has only been one across-the-board increase in rates during that period – despite rapidly escalating costs. Many would argue that these cuts may help alleviate the immediate budget crisis but they will cost California more in the long run as providers are forced out of the program and costs are simply shifted to insured Californians. Legislators have expressed some interest in overturning the cuts and COPA will continue to remind them in no uncertain terms of the important reasons why they need to stop these cuts.

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsome has also joined the fight alongside the APC coalition and COPA. On March 25th, COPA participated in a meeting hosted by Mayor Newsome in Sacramento, where a political and legal strategy to stop the Medi-Cal cuts was

discussed. As a result, a lawsuit will be filed against the State of California claiming that these cuts violate Medi-Cal patient access to care as mandated under federal law. If such an injunction is successful in the courts, then these cuts will not be implemented. Therefore, the Legislature will need to look other places to seek a political remedy for trimming the budget.

Finally, notice the irony in a strongly worded statement issued by Governor Schwarzenegger recently that applauds Congress for blocking proposed federal Medicaid cuts. The cuts, he declared, would "impact services to vulnerable Californians and cut reimbursements to safety net and teaching hospitals across the state as well as local governments, school districts and numerous state agencies."

*If you miss a day
"Under the Dome" –
you miss a lot!*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES: \$1,200 Annual Dues (please check applicable category)

- Corporate – Patient Care:** Any firm or corporation that is principally engaged in the business of providing O&P direct services is eligible for this membership category.
- Corporate – Supplier:** Any firm of corporation that is principally engaged in supplying O&P businesses is eligible for this membership category.
- Corporate – Allied Health:** Any organization, firm or corporation that is engaged in the allied health field that serves O&P clients and businesses is eligible for this membership category.
- Corporate – Associate:** Any organization that represents consumers of orthotic and prosthetic care or other professionals who may also provide services to orthotic and prosthetic consumers is eligible for this membership category.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES: \$120 Annual Dues (please check applicable category)

- Individual – Certified:** Any practitioner who is currently certified and in good standing with the American Board for Certification in Orthotics and Prosthetics (A.B.C.) and/or the Board for Orthotist/Prosthetist Certification (B.O.C.) is eligible for this membership category.
- Individual – Technician/Fitter:** Any technician currently registered with the A.B.C. or any fitter certified by the B.O.C. is eligible for this membership category.
- Individual – Associate:** Any person with a professional interest in orthotics and prosthetics is eligible for this membership category.

(Name, Company)

(Address, City, State, Zip)

(Phone, Fax, Email)

NOTE: Please check here if you decline to have 25% of your annual dues dedicated to the COPA Political Action Committee.

Please make checks payable to: **COPA**

Share this membership application with your colleagues so they can become a member of the premier orthotics and prosthetics association in California.

[View Membership Application Online!](#)

[Membership Registration Online!](#)

POLITICAL ACTION CONTRIBUTIONS

COPA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE *CORPORATE* CONTRIBUTION FORM

President's Club (\$2,500-\$6,000): These prestigious members include manufacturers, patient care businesses and individuals who want to be constant and consistent actors in the issues surrounding the O&P industry. In addition to receiving all of the benefits provided to Leadership Board and Golden State Club members also receive a specially designed President's Club lapel pin; complimentary admission to all COPA events and Complimentary admission for one guest to attend a President's Club event. In addition, President's Club members may be included in "invitation only" receptions and functions with legislators whenever possible.

Leadership Board (\$1,000-\$2,499): These members receive a specially designed Leadership Board lapel pin; invitations to legislative briefings and receptions featuring key legislators who are active in healthcare policy and special recognition throughout the year at events and in COPA publications.

Golden State Club (\$500-\$999): These members receive a specially designed Golden State Club lapel pin and special recognition throughout the year.

STATE LAW REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING:

(Name, Company)

(Employer or Occupation)

(Address, City State, Zip, Phone)

COPA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE *INDIVIDUAL* CONTRIBUTION FORM

Silver Dollar Club (\$365 One Dollar per Day): These prestigious members receive a specially designed Silver Dollar Club lapel pin and special recognition throughout the year.

Future Framers Club (\$25): These student members receive a Certificate of Appreciation for their contribution and education and training about effective advocacy and professional communication with legislators.

(Name)

(Employer or Occupation)

(Address, City State, Zip, Phone)

NOTE: COPA PAC contributions are NOT deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Contributions may not exceed \$6,000 in one calendar year.

Please make checks payable to: **COPA PAC (ID#791961)**

COPA/PAC
Corporate Contribution
Pledge Form

COPA/PAC
Individual Contribution
Pledge Form

California Orthotics and
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www.oandp.com/
copa



COPA'S MISSION...

To improve the business climate in California for orthotic and prosthetic companies by:

- o Striving for fair reimbursement from private and public payors;
- o Ensuring competent and ethical treatment of patients;
- o Educating the public about the unique skills and knowledge base of the Orthotist and Prosthetist and the contributions they make;
- o Emphasizing a high degree of professionalism, and;
- o Fostering fair and open competition.

A PLACE FOR EVERYONE AT COPA...

Strength is measured by numbers. COPA has galvanized support from the O&P business community by encouraging businesses of all sizes to join as corporate members. Today the organization is moving forward in representing the needs of the individual practitioner in all areas of career development, including educational seminars and a renewed commitment to licensure for California. In order to facilitate individual contributions to support COPA, new membership categories have been added to allow students, technicians and practitioners at all levels of the career path to join COPA and share in the march toward professional recognition in California.

STANDING ON SUCCESS...

COPA has a proven track record in legislation, association governance and membership responsiveness. Representing the field since 1970, COPA is an organization that has the resources to bring the community of O&P together as one voice to strengthen and solidify the unique characteristics that typify O&P professionals today. An Uncertain Future Without Your Support... For many years, the few have supported the many while all have prospered. The burden has now become too great and the pool of resources must be widened to ensure continued success.

The threats to the O&P community are real. This year alone, practitioners have been sanctioned by the Board of Pharmacy and the Physical Therapy Licensing Board. Individual lawsuits have been brought against practitioners who now stand in legal limbo with no statutory scope of practice.

Limited state resources to treat the poor and those injured on the job are being bargained away to those with stronger voices and wider support.

What will history say about your commitment to O&P?