



THE COPA CONNECTION

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE RALPH NOBBE, CPO

Orthotic and Prosthetic Colleagues:

The California Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (COPA) has recently completed its 2009-2010 membership renewals. COPA has retained all existing membership and is now embarking on a new member drive. If you are not a current corporate member, your voice in California is not being heard. Corporate membership and active participation will be critical to furthering the orthotic and prosthetic business climate in California. Our voice remains small, but our industry and the patients we serve have a powerful story to tell.

COPA continues to advocate strategically and carefully allocate its resources. We are cultivating support among California legislators looking to the future. COPA is renewing and expanding its relationships with other California healthcare associations as well as other O&P associations. COPA's participation with the [Alliance for Patient Care](#), which represents over 100 organizations dedicated to protecting health care access and quality for California families, and the California Medical Association prevented the 10% reduction to Medi-Cal reimbursements.

The past budget cycle in California has provided COPA some insight into future budgetary limitations. Optional benefit categories, such as O&P, will not be immune to the state fiscal crises and will remain

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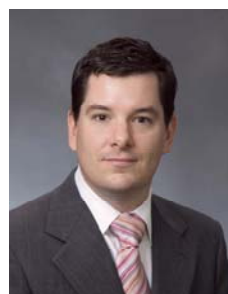


Ralph Nobbe, CPO

UNDER THE DOME

BRYCE W.A. DOCHERTY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/LOBBYIST

"Culture of Failure"



The California Legislature has adjourned for the year with very mixed reviews. In the waning days leading up to adjournment Senate Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) was quoted as saying, "I don't want to part of a culture of failure."

Surely he was specifically referring to the Assembly rejecting the Senate version of an ambitious prison reform plan but also referring to a failed attempt to fix the California water crisis. In the end, Steinberg had to accept the "watered down" Assembly version of reducing the inmate popula-

tion to save close to \$1 billion. This was the same prison reform package that he lamented early on as being insufficient.

The Legislature was successful in sending Governor Schwarzenegger a renewable energy bill. However, it required that the 33 percent requirement for reliance on renewable energy be purchased solely from California producers. This was a non-negotiable requirement demanded by the labor lobby and proved to be the death knell of the bill. Schwarzenegger has already vetoed that bill and issued an Executive Order on a higher commitment to renewable energy but allows such energy to be purchased from producers either in California or located outside the state.

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BOARD MEMBERS[Ralph Nobbe, CPO](#)**President**[Lars Jensen, CP](#)**Vice President**[Rick Chavez, CPO](#)**Immediate Past President**[John Crane](#)**Secretary/Treasurer**[Tom Beall, CPO](#)**Board Member**[Gary G. Bedard, CO, FAAOP](#)**Board Member**[Kel Bergmann, CPO](#)**Board Member**[Harry Brandt, CO, BOCO](#)**Board Member**[Mark Conry, CPO](#)**Board Member**[Robert Jensen](#)**Board Member**[Karl Lindborg, CPO](#)**Board Member**[Bryce W.A. Docherty](#)**Executive Director/
Lobbyist*****President's Message, cont'd.***

at significant risk. O&P escaped the budget axe in this recent round.

Other groups are again preparing expansion of their scope of practice. These same groups have significantly greater membership bases and financial resources than COPA.

COPA has embarked upon the Strategic Plan of 2009-2011 and intends to: 1) Sustain and unprecedented member value; 2) ensure patients receive the information and access to care that will lead to quality outcomes; and 3) support an inclusive governance and staff structure.

In expanding member value COPA has already secured a mandated CMS Medicare bond for its members that is unequaled in price and ease of application through a California based insurance brokerage. Our first educational event at Shriners' Hospital in Los Angeles on Saturday, May 9, 2009, was a resounding success and motivator for future events to benefit our California members. COPA is reaching out to sister organizations, regionally and nationally, as well as to individuals and students of O&P to bring a unified voice of Orthotics and Prosthetics to California.

COPA is continuing to build its membership and will expand its reach in the coming years. We will become more proactive but will select our battles carefully to ensure the best member value for our California membership.

I encourage all business owners to review the benefits they receive from COPA membership. We are a volunteer organization and will only succeed with your corporate support. Our core membership will remain the California corporate member. I am confident that with your support and active participation the California Orthotic and Prosthetic Association can become the voice of California.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *The COPA Connection*.

Under the dome, cont'd.

In the end the Legislature passed a revised version of the 2008-09 budget and fixed major gaps in the 2009-2010 budget twice! These budgets were packed with accounting gimmicks and savings proposals that never materialized. Thanks to the lobbying efforts of COPA, none of these budgets cut Medi-Cal provider rates nor eliminated O&P as an optional benefit within the program. Nonetheless, anticipate the budget fiasco being the top priority for the Legislature when they reconvene in January.

However, two Extraordinary Sessions have already been declared. One pertains to education reform and the other to fixing the broken tax structure in California. Of course other sessions could also be declared. So, the moral of the story is that the Legislature is never really done failing to fail.

Below is a brief analysis and status summary of key bills COPA was involved in this session:

AB 2 (De La Torre): This CMA-sponsored bill would protect patients by requiring health care service plans or insurers to obtain final approval from an independent review organization prior to rescinding a health plan contract or insurance policy. This review would use a clear legal framework to determine whether the rescission is appropriate while protecting patient rights during the review process. This bill would also improve the process at the front-end by requiring health plans and insurers to complete medical underwriting prior to issuing a policy and make applications easier to fill out accurately and completely.

Status: On Governor Schwarzenegger's Desk

COPA Position: SUPPORT

(Continued on page 3)

Under the Dome, cont'd.

AB 721 (Nava): This bill would substantially expand the scope of practice for physical therapists by allowing them to evaluate and treat patients directly without a previous diagnosis or referral from a physician.

Status: Held in the Assembly Business & Professions Committee: Two-Year Bill
COPA Position: OPPOSE

AB 1422 (Bass): This bill provides, on an urgency basis, funding for, and makes program changes to, the Healthy Families Program (HFP), administered by the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board (MRMIB), which provides health care coverage for eligible low and moderate income children. This bill also extends the gross premium tax of 2.35% to Medi-Cal managed care (MCMC) plans; and, authorizes the California Children and Families Commission (CCFC) to make specified transfers of program revenues. This bill primarily restores most of the HFP cuts made by Gov. Schwarzenegger. This bill also prevents disenrollment of 600,000 children from the HFP and removes the waiting list through 2010 for as many as 88,000 children.

Status: Signed by Governor Schwarzenegger
COPA Position: SUPPORT

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



AMERICAN
 ORTHOTIC & PROSTHETIC
 ASSOCIATION
 SERVING THE O&P FIELD FOR OVER 90 YEARS

AOPA INSIDER
 A weekly news and information resource from AOPA

UPCOMING CHANGES TO THE ORTHOPEDIC SHOE POLICY

Beginning Thursday, October 1, 2009, each claim line for orthopedic shoes must include the KX or the GY modifier. If the items you are providing meet the coverage criteria set forth in the policy, each claim line would include a KX modifier. If an item does not meet the coverage criteria or is a non-covered item (i.e. shoes not attached to a brace) the claim line must include the GY modifier and this claim line will be denied. Therefore, each shoe, insert or modification must include either the KX or the GY modifier. If a claim line doesn't include a modifier, then that line will be rejected and you will have to resubmit that claim line with the appropriate modifier.

The above article appears through the courtesy of the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (AOPA), where it appeared recently in their publication "AOPA Insider."

ANNOUNCEMENTS & ALERTS



COPA Secures Special CMS Medicare Surety Bond Rate

The deadline of Friday, October 2, 2009, for obtaining your CMS Medicare Surety Bond is fast approaching!

COPA has been able to secure great rates for this bond and a simple one-page application form via Morris & Garritano Insurance. COPA notified its members of this benefit via email on Monday, August 24, 2009. For further information, please contact Myrna Smith at (805) 543-6887 Ext. 329 or msmith@morrisgarritano.com.

DON'T FORGET TO MENTION YOU'RE A COPA MEMBER TO RECEIVE THIS GREAT MEMBER RATE AND BENEFIT!

AB 1324 (De La Torre): Are You Getting Paid?

Effective January 1, 2008, commercial carriers are required to pay providers in some instances in which a provider obtained authorization even if the member is later determined to be not eligible for coverage.

Authorizations do not guarantee eligibility. AB 1324 (De La Torre) applies to authorized services. Providers must verify eligibility two days prior to the date of service. Acceptable forms for "proof of eligibility" include:

- A print out from the plan website showing the member PCP eligibility history.
- Telephone eligibility verification should include the date and the name of the person from the plan.

Proof of eligibility along with the authorization is required for the service to be eligible for payment. AB 1324 (De La Torre) does not apply to FEP enrollees of the California Healthy Families Program.

Did You Know?

IOUs Redeemable as of Friday, September 4, 2009

State Treasurer Bill Lockyer has announced that anyone holding state-issued IOUs can redeem them as of Friday, September 4, 2009, either in person or via mail. The processing time on mailed IOUs, from the date they are mailed to the date recipients receive their state check will be about 7-10 days. Walk in hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. A holder presenting a registered warrant for payment by mail must include a return mail address. A third party holder of a registered warrant, whether redeeming in person or by mail, must also submit a notarized bill of sale signed by the party to whom the registered warrant was issued. This requirement to present a notarized bill of sale to redeem a registered warrant does not apply to a state or local government agency, special district, bank or other financial institution, including, but not limited to, a brokerage firm, an investment banking firm, an asset management firm, or a broker-dealer. Upon presentation either in person or by mail, the State Treasurer's Office will issue a demand check representing full payment of the principal amount of the registered warrant plus accrued interest from the issue date to the Redemption Date. However, interest on the IOUs will only be accrued through Thursday, September 3, 2009. Holders will not earn interest past that date. The walk in and mailing address are the same at:

Office of State Treasurer Bill Lockyer
Attn: Registered Warrant Desk
915 Capitol Mall, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Click [here](#) for more information regarding the redemption of IOUs or contact Tom Dresslar at (916) 653-2995.

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. Contributions or dues payments to COPA or COPA PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal income tax purposes. COPA estimates that 10% of your membership dues will be allocated to lobbying expenditures for the fiscal year 2009/2010, and are not deductible as business expenses.

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.

Click here to view:
[Membership Registration Online!](#)

POLITICAL ACTION CONTRIBUTIONS

COPA POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE *CORPORATE* CONTRIBUTION FORM

President's Club (\$2,500-\$6,500): 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 \$6,500 in one calendar year.

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

Click here to view:

[COPA/PAC](#)
[Corporate](#)
[Contribution](#)
[Pledge Form](#)

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We're on the web!
[www.oandp.com/
copa](http://www.oandp.com/copa)

COPA'S MISSION...

Promoting the art and science of Orthotic and Prosthetic practice to create and communicate innovative solutions for a positive patient experience.

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?