

MOA MEMBERS
FROM SUE A. WEINGARNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MAY 22, 2009

STATE AFFILIATE POSITIONS RE BOARD CERTIFICATION PROPOSAL

In order to keep you fully apprised of what is happening on all fronts with the JBCPT proposal on board certification/continued maintenance, we are forwarding all information received by MOA to each of you. We have previously forwarded position papers from other state affiliates. Most recently were Florida, Washington and the COVD. In the case of less lengthy stated positions, I will forward these to you in the body of emails. Here are the positions we have received recently from other states; additional information will be forwarded as received.

COLORADO: Colorado's Board has developed a survey on BC that will be sent to all members during the first two weeks of June. Colorado's votes will reflect the percentage of votes on the survey questions, so Colorado's position won't be known until just before AOA.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma sends the votes uninstructed. After a thorough discussion the OAOP Board of Directors voted to support JBCT and presented the support and the reasons to the members and non members in attendance at our annual meeting. There were 175 in attendance and good discussion at the meeting. Since then we have promoted that opinion through website email and newsletter and district meetings. The officers have talked to the few members that are asking questions and are reading the internet list info. There is almost no outcry or opposition. Oklahoma seems to take it in stride, we have such a medical mindset it doesn't seem unusual to meet additional standards. We are doing well, our practices are doing well, and our membership is at 90 per cent for the first time in several years.

Mississippi: Mississippi has not defined its position. Our annual membership meeting will be held on June 6 and Dr. David Cockrell will be presenting the AOA position with our members at that time. The membership will then have an opportunity to vote its instruction to our AOA Congressional delegation.

Nebraska: Some will undoubtedly not like the way we vote, whatever that turns out to be (Nebraska's stance will not be determined by our Board until June 15), but all the feedback we are getting indicates that members at least recognize and appreciate that they are getting a legitimate opportunity to weigh in on the issue.

Texas: Texas would like to ask what the states are specifically doing to help smooth the feathers on both sides of this question. We are going to area wide society meetings all over the state and talking about the Board Certification proposal as it evolves, putting out position statements on both sides, having AOA trustees go to meetings and explain what changes are happening and are trying to think of ways to

get our optometrists as informed on the program as possible before we go to Optometry's Meeting.

Washington: After carefully considering all available information regarding Maintenance of Certification, and weighing the concerns and opinions of its membership, the Board of Trustees of the Optometric Physicians of Washington recommends our delegates support the Joint Board Certification Project Team proposal for the formation of the American Board of Optometry during the AOA House of Delegates. ... As Optometry's Meeting approaches we will continue to weigh all forthcoming information (from the JBCPT, CMS, third part payers and others), to listen to member input, and to consult with other leaders until the final proposal is actually put to the vote in the AOA House of Delegates.

Florida: ...the FOA leadership and delegates will cast a vote of "No" on the JBCPT proposal at the upcoming AOA Congress – House of Delegates meeting in Washington, D.C. in June 2009. The "No" vote is not because FOA anticipates that the future of Optometry will not involve some formal program/requirement to measure advanced and/or continued competency. Rather, the "No" vote is based upon many elements of the original January 2009 JBCPT proposal which have continued to change, be modified, or added without the benefit of full disclosure to, and input from, our membership. The FOA Board of Trustees may consider supporting a Resolution to delay a vote on this issue, if a delay is proposed during the AOA House of Delegates meeting. Nevertheless, FOA leadership believes two elements will remain critical to a final decision in this matter: (a) the federal government's involvement on this topic is not going away – rather, we expect that reimbursement and quality of care models will continue to challenge Optometry's standing; and (b) until a final model, including an organizational formation (ABO), is resolved, it is impossible to keep the stakeholders (FOA members and AOA members) properly informed prior to implementation. ...

Indiana: ...the Indiana Optometric Association opposes the establishment of the board certification framework for general optometry as proposed by the JBCT. ...further...urges the House of Delegates of the AOA to reject any effort in 2009 to approve an alternative to the JBCT's board certification framework and that any alternative plan be considered at a subsequent House of Delegates meeting after members and affiliates of the American Optometric Association have had sufficient time to fully consider and vet the alternative proposed framework.

Ohio: ..we find board certification in optometry to be unnecessary to demonstrate continued competence and divisive to the profession.