

LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD

I write this month's President Letter prior to the Medical Society's rally for liability reform. The rally is intended to bring national attention to the current state of the crisis and hopefully, it will have been a success. Regardless of the direct outcome of the rally, I hope the effort will result in a continued unification of the medical community to further those causes that are so important to patients and medical professionals. A unified profession can accomplish so much, and I expect that our activity causes more physicians to join and be involved in local, state and national medical associations. The saying that "all politics are local" certainly was true in this case as the activity in Tucson spurred all that followed. Anyone who is unhappy with the direction of the Society should now realize that they can be active, lead and make a difference.

Of course the general elections occurred prior to your reading this as well. Once again, I remind you that our issues are not partisan in nature, but they are political. We must continue to take a strong position behind those who have doctors' and patients' interests in mind, not the trial lawyer lobby. If our community becomes dormant and does not stand somewhere, we should not expect either political party to be concerned with our critical issues.

I am pleased with the knowledge that the incoming presidents of both the Medical Society and ArMA fully comprehend the importance of finding a resolution to the liability crisis. The fire in their bellies on this issue rests with the knowledge that it is not a question of 'if', but of 'when', and a solution will be found regardless of political parties in power. The health of our communities resides in a functioning and quality medical system. The medical liability dragon must be slain.

Many other issues will face us in the future. Insurance company and government intrusion into the practice of medicine through laws, regulations or simply the power of the purse is one example. The community looks to us for advice and leadership on the many issues affecting health care as, in reality; doctors are the patients only advocates. Our mission must be for the public good. If the medical community can speak as a unit, it will be a roar. Let us continue to focus on the issues of our members and march together into the future.

See you next month!

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President