

ACA Reaffirms Fight Against Provider Discrimination Following AMA Vote

The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) has reaffirmed its commitment to fighting provider discrimination in response to a recent decision by the American Medical Association's (AMA) House of Delegates to initiate a lobbying effort against [Section 2706](#), the provider non-discrimination provision in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA).

Section 2706 prohibits insurance companies from discriminating against health care providers relative to their participation and coverage in health plans. It is applicable to all Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) health care plans, including self-insured, multi-state plans that are not subject to provider-friendly state laws. ACA worked hard to ensure the inclusion of this provision in the health care reform legislation.

"As *the* voice of the chiropractic profession on Capitol Hill, ACA will not yield in its efforts to fight any threat to our patients' access to the services of DCs and for our doctors' right to practice to the full extent of their education and training," said ACA President [Keith Overland](#), DC. "AMA's decision is outdated, and it demonstrates a desire, by some, to cling to the 'old guard,' but it is not in patients' or our country's best interests. Section 2706 will extend new health care services to millions, and it will help address the primary care shortage threatening our nation."

In its ongoing advocacy work, ACA highlights the value that DCs add to the health care system, particularly in respect to challenges faced by today's health care consumer:

1. **The primary care shortage:** According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, by 2015 the U.S. will face a shortage of more than 60,000 physicians across primary care, surgical and medical specialties. Every health care provider will have to practice to the fullest extent of his or her scope of practice. ACA believes that since DCs are already in the local physician supply pool and have legislative recognition as a "portal of entry" to the health care system, they should be among the first providers utilized to help relieve this shortage.
2. **Runaway health care costs:** PPACA was designed to address the need to control unbridled health care costs. Section 2706 was included to encourage full utilization of health care providers and reduce the cost of patient care. Studies have repeatedly shown that the services provided by doctors of chiropractic are effective and cost less than medical care.
3. **Lack of treatment options:** Patients are becoming more aware of the downsides of over reliance on prescription drugs and the premature use of surgical care for common health conditions such as low-back pain. DCs offer care that is not dependent on drugs or surgery, but is highly effective for many health conditions.

"It is important to recognize Section 2706 - an act of Congress to end provider discrimination based on one's license - as historic for the chiropractic profession," said Mike Schroeder, vice president of the National Association of Chiropractic Attorneys (NACA). "However, as significant the provision is, it is possible to lose ground during the implementation of [PPACA](#), so NACA strongly encourages DCs to support ACA in its efforts to ensure the patient protections intended in the provision."

Source: American Chiropractic Association

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