

Are You Listening, Governor Davis?

Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h), Publisher

What will it take to be heard? For three long years, the chiropractic profession has failed to get the attention of California Governor Gray Davis to appoint new members to the California Board of Chiropractic Examiners (CBCE). (Please see "[Demise of the California Board of Chiropractic](#)" on the front page of this issue.) Over and over again, chiropractic leaders in the state were told that new appointments were coming, but this was an empty promise.

Unfortunately, not a single appointment has been made to the CBCE during Davis' tenure. The terms of the last two board members expired on February 11, 2002. They are now serving their one-year grace periods.

A functioning licensing board is vital for California chiropractors, especially in light of recent news in the state:

- As this article goes to press, the second in a series of television news reports that link local doctors of chiropractic to prostitution rings has just aired. The first report, "Doctor Sex Houses," was broadcast February 13 on a Southern California television station. It gave the public the impression that "more than 100 chiropractors' offices" have been involved with prostitution. The second television news report, which aired on February 26, rehashed much of the same information - further damaging the public's perception of chiropractic.
- There is a California ballot measure (Proposition 44) that "... requires revocation of a chiropractor's license to practice for 10 years upon the second conviction, or multiple convictions, of specified insurance fraud offenses." It's now up to the California consuming public to vote on this amendment that would "specify practices constituting unprofessional conduct" by chiropractors.
- In addition, *Dynamic Chiropractic* has received a complaint that the bureaucrats who remain to carry out the functions of the chiropractor-less board are acting in a "heavy-handed" manner. Needless to say, the decisions these state employees make will no longer be influenced by practicing DCs.

These are just a few examples of the issues a functioning licensing board would be addressing, in addition to chiropractic regulations, legislation, and safeguarding the practice of chiropractic from being imitated by other professions.

But the CBCE hasn't had enough members to be functional since June of last year. They haven't even been able to hold an official meeting since July 2001.

Apparently this is of no importance to Gray Davis. For some reason he is willing to make appointments to every other licensing board and commission in the state except chiropractic.

Why? That's anybody's guess. But after three years, it should be obvious that Davis either doesn't like

chiropractors, wants chiropractic under the California Department of Consumer Affairs, or just wants to make life hard for chiropractors. Whatever his reason, Davis has ignored this profession for too long, effectively removing every doctor of chiropractic from the CBCE.

So what should our response be? The good news is that this is an election year. Theoretically, this is a time when political incumbents try to placate every special interest group in the state just to stay in office. This should be the time Davis finally makes the appointments, unless he just hates chiropractors. In that case, not even the threat of an election will cause him to act.

Assuming for the moment that Davis isn't anti-chiropractic, he may be amenable to making the needed appointments if he believes there are enough potential voters interested in the issue. And while Davis may not have much respect for the almost 10,000 doctors of chiropractic in California, he should hold some regard for the approximately two million patients they serve (roughly eight percent of the state's adult population).

But Davis must know that you are serious about this issue, and willing to talk to every one of your patients about how he has ignored the chiropractic profession in preference to MDs, physical therapists, and the horse racing commission!

To send that message, DCs (and chiropractic students) across the state need to mail, email, fax or call Governor Gray Davis and provide a simple piece of information: the number of patients you have.

Once Governor Davis begins to understand just how many chiropractic patients there really are in California, he should be able to do the math and appreciate how many potential voters will be affected by his deliberate lack of action. This will perhaps stir him to get moving. If it doesn't, then the concern that Davis hates the chiropractic profession may be valid after all.

Please mail your business card to or email, fax or call Governor Davis' office with your name and the number of chiropractic patients you have:

Governor Gray Davis
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: 916-445-2841
Fax: 916-445-4633

governor@governor.ca.gov

Your prompt participation is of the utmost importance. Thank you.

Donald M. Petersen Jr., BS, HCD (hc), FICCC(h)
Editor / Publisher of Dynamic Chiropractic
don@mpamedia.com

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