



From the Boardroom

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FROM THE BOARDROOM

To enhance communications between ACCC leadership and membership, *Oncology Issues* will publish excerpts from ACCC Board meetings as they occur. The following excerpts are from the most recent meeting, which was held during the course of ACCC's Annual National Meeting in March 1992.

The ACCC Board reviewed the following documents, and approved the following actions:

- It reviewed comments from membership and recommendations from the Strategic Planning Committee on ACCC's mission, goals and objectives, and it approved a final version for presentation to membership at the House of Delegates business meeting.
- The Board reviewed a draft letter to Samuel Broder, M.D., which addressed concerns expressed by the Board and by participants in the CCOP SIG regarding patient accruals for treatment trials and cancer control trials.
- It reviewed comments submitted to Bruce Chabner, M.D., in advance of his meeting with the FDA. These comments outlined issues of concern expressed by the Board about the FDA's draft concept paper entitled, "Drug Company Supported Activities in Scientific and Educational Contexts."
- The Board discussed comments from meeting participants on the format of ACCC meetings. Suggestions included:
 - Do not schedule competing sessions if they are not repeated
 - Adopt a "Meet the Professor" format for scientific sessions
- The Board approved San Francisco, CA, as the location for the Fall 1993 meeting.
- The Board discussed mechanisms for committee membership recruitment.
- The Board favorably considered an initiative by staff to investigate an interest in administrative chapters of ACCC in several states. ■

PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE

State-Level Activities Make Steady Progress



Great strides have been made on the state legislative scene since the last edition of *Oncology Issues*. The following is a brief update on the progress to date.

- The California Assembly approved Assemblywoman Jacqueline Speier's off-label drug legislation (AB 1985). The bill is now before the Senate Insurance, Claims and Corporations Committee. Hearings are anticipated in June.
- Although we are pleased with the agreement that was offered by the Blues in Hawaii (see the news item on page 9), ACCC will remain vigilant in working with our Hawaii-based members to ensure that the Blues fulfill the terms of that agreement.
- In Indiana, planning for next year's legislative effort is underway. Members of ACCC and the Indiana Medical Oncology Society will soon receive a survey intended to gather data on off-label denials to assist in our 1993 efforts.
- An April press conference in Illinois focused attention on Senate Bill 1533. Sen. Penny Severns, the sponsor of the bill, and a large number of her Senate co-sponsors, were present. Representatives from ACCC, the Illinois Medical Oncology Society, the American Cancer Society (ACS), the National Coalition for Cancer Survival, the Illinois Hospital Association, the Chicago chapter of the Oncology Nursing Society, and other groups supporting the bill participated. At *Oncology Issues* deadline, the Senate Committee was

expected to schedule a vote on the bill as early as the last week of April.

- Boston was the site of a March hearing on S. 689, the off-label legislation introduced in Massachusetts by Sen. Nancy Achin Sullivan. Testimony was presented by Dr. Lee Mortenson, ACCC Executive Director; Dr. Lowell Schnipper, Past President of the ACS Massachusetts Division; Dr. Walter Kagan, President of the Massachusetts Society of Clinical Oncology; Dr. William McDermott of the Massachusetts Medical Society; and Dr. Paul Hetzel, a medical oncologist from Springfield, MA. Several cancer patients testified about their own battles with cancer and their insurance companies. No testimony was presented by the opposition. The presentation was effective because, on April 8, the Joint Committee on Insurance favorably recommended the bill. It is now before the Senate Ways and Means Committee.
- Thanks in large part to the efforts of Dr. Irv Lerner and Dr. Mike Ryan, legislation was introduced in Minnesota by State Rep. Alice Hausman. House Majority Leader, Rep. Alan Welle, and the Chairman of the Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee, Rep. Wes Skoglund, co-authored House File 2648. Consideration was given to attaching the proposal to another piece of legislation, but the idea didn't come to fruition. The Minnesota legislature will soon be finishing for the year and no further action is anticipated. However, we have high hopes for legislation in this state in 1993.

A number of states have expressed interest in pursuing legislation for introduction next year. ACCC will be providing information and assistance in the states of Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, and Virginia. If you are interested in information on any of the efforts underway across the country, please contact the ACCC Columbus office (Phone: 614/848-5404; Fax: 614/848-5420) or your state society president.

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