



**SPEECH TO THE CMAA HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
October 17, 2009**

**Debbi Ricks, CMAA President  
Fall Conference 2009**

“Mr. Speaker, CMA Officers, members of the House of Delegates, Alliance members, CMA & CMA Foundation staff, component society staff, family and friends...” It is a an honor to be the President of the California Medical Association Alliance and to have the privilege of speaking to you as the representative of your largest volunteer workforce, the members of the CMA Alliance. We’re trying something new this year and are having our Fall Conference here with your meeting. It’s a pleasure to be joining you.

I don’t know about you, but it’s been a disruptive time in our household these past few weeks with uncertainty about almost everything except that there will be massive change, change in the way medicine is practiced, organized and compensated. Every day brings new details of the ways in which health care will be reshaped.

I am not a physician nor a medical professional, but as the spouse of a physician for 32 years, I know first hand the unique rewards we realize and the struggles that go along with being a part of this family of medicine. We are all affected by the stresses and pressures of the changing medical climate and it looks like this will continue for a while.

As I travel across the state exchanging ideas with those in the medical profession, it has become evident how important it is to strengthen the ties we have with each other. Whether our physicians are solo, in small practices or part of a large group, we all want what is best for the patients seen in your offices every day and we want you to be able to enjoy your work and to have a life outside the office. Part of our job is to help make that happen.

The CMA Alliance has changed focus in the last couple of years after taking a long, hard look at our priorities. I'm personally very excited about where we are headed. We have a new physicians-in-training committee formed this year to reach out and support our medical students, residents and their families. We also are broadening our membership at the state level to encourage more Friends & Family of medicine members. Jean Cassetta, the Membership Director for the Santa Clara County Medical Association and the Monterey County Medical Society is one of our friends of medicine members and is on our CMAA Physicians-in-Training Committee.

Another focus is reestablishing formerly active Alliances. We were very pleased to have been invited to and have attended Medical Society functions in both Monterey and Placer/Nevada counties this year and are working on the next steps for meet and greet functions there.

Another priority was to add an executive director to work out of the CMA Alliance office that is located with the CMA on J St in Sacramento. Beverly Hook works closely with the CMA staff at the office.

Our priorities also include working more closely with CMA and CMA Foundation staff. I would like to personally thank Dr. GnanaDev, Joe Dunn, Carol Lee and the rest of the staff for their support and assistance with our programming. We look forward to working with our new CEO, Mr. Gilchrist who comes highly recommended by the Alliance members in both Colorado and Texas.

What else are Alliance members doing around the state? The Kern County members are currently getting doctors to FAX letters to their congressmen stating their personal views on health care reform. 20 CMA Alliance members have traveled to Washington DC to participate in the AMA's National Advocacy Conference in the last three years,

38 of us from all over the state attended Legislation Day last April in Sacramento. There are currently 80 Alliance CALPAC members...up 10% from last year. These 80 members have contributed a total of \$4000 to the cause. In 2010, our goal is to double that membership and to double the contribution amount.

Collectively, the Alliance fundraising efforts in the state have raised over \$150,000 in the last year. This money went right back into local community health programs and medical field scholarships.

Now I come to a very important part of this speech...our challenge to you. The CMA Alliance has worked hard to restructure so that we can best meet the needs of our members, our physicians and the Californians you treat who benefit from our efforts. We have opened our membership to all.

We are physicians, spouses, partners, medical students family members and friends.

To be heard in this day and age you need numbers and volunteers. I challenge you to have 1 member from each family represented here today be an Alliance member...whether it is the doctor, the spouse/partner, family member or friend.

Each of you has an Alliance membership brochure in front of you that summarizes who we are. (Hold up brochure) Join us Become a member. Get involved. Help us help you make a difference...Just for the HEALTH of it!

Thank you.

