

CAL/AAEM**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE****Proposition 67—Serving a
Vital Need in California
Emergency Care****Shahram Lottfipour, MD, FAAEM**

If only one issue could be advanced this fall that would benefit Emergency Care the most, I believe it would be to pass the Emergency Care Ballot Initiative in November. The Emergency Care Initiative, also known as Proposition 67, will dramatically affect the way uncompensated emergency care is handled in the future. The initiative will provide funding for emergency personnel training and equipment, reimbursement for uncompensated emergency physician care, uncompensated community clinic care, emergency telephone system improvements, and to hospitals for emergency services. The initiative will be funded by a 3% surcharge to telephone use in California, portions of tobacco taxes, and criminal and traffic penalties. Increased revenues are estimated at about \$550 million annually from increased charges on telephone usage for emergency care services and other specified purposes. With potentially declining Medi-Cal and Medicare reimbursements, Prop 67 will become a vital resource in maintaining our safety net in California. This initiative will only be possible with the generous support of our members. We encourage you to contribute today by visiting (<http://www.saveemergencycare.org>).

Cal/AAEM has committed to offering our members the End of Life Course to help satisfy new state requirements in this area. The "Pain Management and End of Life"-specific CME credits are currently required by California state law for every licensed physician in California. Some of the topics covered include special lectures on pain management in the pediatric population, management of chronic pain in the ED, and the dilemma of "drug seekers." The End of Life course will be offered in San Diego the two days immediately preceding the Assembly. Dr. Joanne Williams has spent considerable volunteer time organizing this course for you. I hope this serves as a valuable resource to our members. If you are interested in this course, sign up with AAEM (info@aaem.org).

Cal/AAEM has continued serving the membership with many activities in the state. We most recently co-sponsored the Legislative and Leadership Forum with Cal/ACEP and Cal/ENA. Cal/AAEM has also continued to have the Business Forum at every Cal/ACEP Assembly. We have continued to represent you at the state level with Legislative Advocacy through Cal/ACEP. Cal/AAEM has a representative on the Government Affairs Committee of Cal/ACEP and monitors state legislative issues that affect AAEM members in California. These are publicized to you through reports in Cal/JEM. The California Journal of Emergency Medicine has continued to flourish and provide a vital source of educational communication to our members. For the 6th consecutive year, the CAL/AAEM News Service continues to monitor and forward to hundreds of subscribers 3-4 weekly brief updates of relevance to EM practice or AAEM. Cal/AAEM will continue its presence in the state through these and other forums in the coming year.

Cal/AAEM and AAEM members who are interested in playing an active role are encouraged to get involved as board members in the state chapter. We currently have many projects where we would welcome your participation. So far the state chapter has been supported by a limited number of active participants and we encourage your participation and support. Make your commitment today. We also encourage members who have new ideas to pursue them through the state chapter as their own project. I also look forward to meeting all of you at our Cal/AAEM activity in San Diego at our National Assembly in February.

I want to encourage every AAEM member in California to not only join Cal/AAEM, but to contribute either to EMPAC—the state fund which is supported by CAL/AAEM and CAL/ACEP—or to the AAEM National Political Action Committee (AAEM-PAC). California EMPAC funds will be used to support the upcoming Emergency Care Initiative for the November 2004 ballot. I challenge every member of Cal/AAEM to join me and the other Cal/AAEM board members in contributing through your Cal/AAEM Chapter to support the many challenges our state faces in the future. I look forward to working with you in the upcoming year. I welcome any comments and suggestions (safetynet101-calaaem@yahoo.com).