

February 14, 2012

Doctor Machado and Board of Governors
Florida Medical Association
Tallahassee, Florida

Dear Doctors:

The members of the Board of Directors of the Broward County Medical Association wish to record their displeasure concerning the Florida Medical Association's capitulation to the Florida Legislature concerning the optometrist's scope of practice expansion.

While the FMA legislative accomplishments over the years is admirable, we are concerned with the FMA's recent acceptance of political expediency over principle. Last year, the FMA tacitly accepted the expansion of Medicaid Reform to achieve passage of the Medical Witness Certificate, exposing even more doctors to the difficulties of Medicaid managed care. Also in the last session, the pediatricians were sacrificed by the FMA's muted opposition to the Gun Law.

While responsible politicians may compromise to pass legislation, it is neither the responsibility nor the function of the FMA to engage in political arbitrage. To remain credible, the FMA has the obligation to remain true to its ideals and advocate solely from the perspective of protecting doctors, their patients, and our ability to practice. It is the role of politicians to compromise not physicians.

Further, we feel that the FMA's defining the value of a physician and specialty society based on their political contribution is demeaning and insulting. Your email message of February 10 seems to draw that implication.

As such, please be advised that the Broward County Medical Association intends to lobby the Florida Legislature independent of the FMA advising them that permitting optometrist to prescribe medication and perform office surgeries exceeds their education and training and potentially creates a potentially unsafe condition for patients. Our position remains unchanged: we steadfastly oppose the expansion of the optometrist's scope of practice. We encourage you and the board to reconsider your position.

Very truly yours,

Kutty Chandran, M.D.

Kutty Chandran, M.D.
President