

House of Delegates 2026

CMA Physicians Chart a Shared Path Forward

The California Medical Association (CMA) convened its 155th annual House of Delegates (HOD) in Sacramento on Oct. 17–18, bringing physician leaders together to debate the issues facing medicine and help guide the association's advocacy for patients and physicians.

The weekend combined policy deliberations with leadership transitions, recognition of extraordinary service and a shared call to action. From protecting Medi-Cal funding and reforming Medicare physician payment to defending public health, supporting physician practices and developing future leaders, the discussions underscored the reach of organized medicine – and the responsibility physicians share to shape what comes next.

Policy and Governance

A New Approach to Policymaking

This year's meeting marked a shift in how CMA develops policy. Internal governance reforms adopted in 2025 replaced the "Major Issues only" approach with a two-interval model: high-priority and complex resolutions come before the House at its annual meeting, while time-sensitive, straightforward or lower-priority items receive midyear consideration by the Board of Trustees.

The changes grew out of surveys, town halls and delegation feedback gathered by CMA's Governance Technical Advisory Committee, chaired by Holly Yang, M.D. Members called for substantive debate, fewer procedural bottlenecks and a clearer way to prioritize business.

A new Resolution Interest Survey gives House members a voice in determining which proposals come before the full House, while a Resolution Sorting Committee supports a transparent and fair review process. Together, these changes preserve in-person debate and grassroots participation while allowing CMA to act on member-written resolutions throughout the year.

At this year's meeting, delegates considered 21 member-written resolutions on physician practice, patient access to care, medical education and public health. During reference committee hearings, delegates provided testimony to help physician committees develop recommendations for the full House. Delegates then debated and amended those recommendations before voting on CMA policy.

Highlights of the policies approved include:

- **Protecting physician peer support (Resolution 602-26):** Supports voluntary, confidential, and legally protected physician and resident peer support programs.
- **Protecting resident workplace standards (Resolution 612-26):** Opposes weakening resident workplace protections and supports evidence-based work hour standards that balance education, patient safety and wellness.
- **Preserving pediatric care (Resolution 206-26):** Supports improved Medi-Cal reimbursement and funding to sustain and expand pediatric inpatient and critical care services, along with study of regional access, bed availability and patient transfers.
- **Office of Health Care Affordability (Resolution 210-26):** Supports excluding pharmacy costs from Office of Health Care Affordability spending growth target calculations and related penalties, and from primary care and behavioral health benchmark denominators.
- **Strengthening medical debt protections (Resolution 203-26):** Opposes federal preemption of state medical debt credit reporting protections and supports a nationwide reporting ban, flexible payment options and lawful collection of legitimate patient obligations without credit reporting.
- **Advancing physician pay equity (Resolution 606-26):** Supports increasing the collection and availability of aggregate physician compensation data, disclosure of formulas used to determine physician reimbursement, independent pay equity audits, educational and negotiation resources and protections against retaliation for discussing wages.
- **Responding to immigration enforcement (Resolution 503-26):** Supports guidance and institutional policies protecting patient and staff safety, confidentiality and continuity of care during immigration enforcement in health care settings.

- **Recognizing the dangers of cannabis (112-26):** Recognizes the risks of cannabis use for adolescents, young adults, pregnant and breastfeeding persons and other vulnerable populations. Supports evidence-based potency limits, public education on health effects and oversight of funds for cannabis education, prevention, early intervention and treatment.

- **Addressing data center health impacts (Resolution 113-26):** Supports a time-limited pause on approvals for new or expanded data centers of at least 50 megawatts pending health assessments, public reporting, enforceable standards and community input, without affecting existing facilities, health care services or electronic health records.

For more information on these and other resolutions adopted at the 2026 House of Delegates, see the full action book at cmadocs.org/hod.

New Leadership, Shared Purpose

Dr. Jack Chou Takes Office as CMA's 158th President

Los Angeles family physician **Jack Chou, M.D.**, assumed office as CMA's 158th president at the conclusion of the meeting. Addressing physician delegates, Dr. Chou called for a shared commitment to protecting access to care, strengthening relationships within medicine and ensuring technology serves patients and physicians.

"I cannot promise an easy year or that every fight will go our way," Dr. Chou said. "But I can promise you this: none of us will face it alone."

Dr. Chou grounded his remarks in an encounter from his first day on a general surgery rotation as a medical student at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center. An uninsured, undocumented patient who spoke no English repeatedly asked him in Mandarin whether she would be OK. He reassured her that she would – a promise he later recognized he could not guarantee.

The patient recovered, but the encounter stayed with him. She had been asking not only about her condition, he said, but whether she could trust him.

Years later, Dr. Chou helped develop language access services for Mandarin-speaking patients at Kaiser Permanente. That work reinforced the importance of helping patients understand their care while ensuring physicians have the resources to meet their needs.

He told delegates, trust underlies the challenges facing medicine, from federal Medicaid changes and the fight to protect Proposition 35 funding to the growing role of artificial intelligence.

Dr. Chou asked his physician colleagues to work with him to protect access to care and Medi-Cal funding, bringing patient stories into advocacy so policy decisions begin with people.

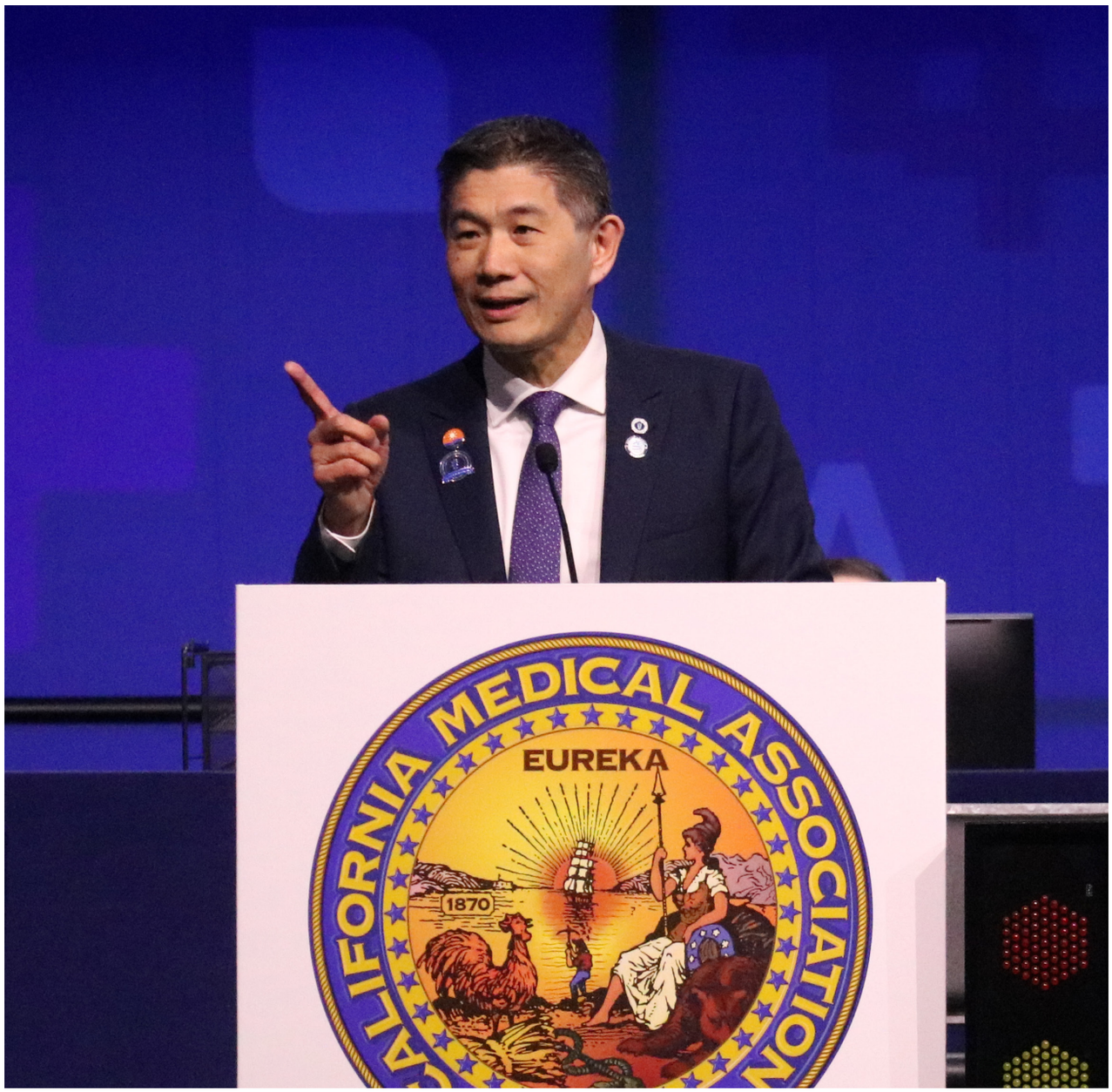
He also urged delegates to connect the optimism of medical students, residents and early career physicians with the experience of longtime physician leaders. "Optimism without experience gets burned," he said. "Experience without optimism stops fighting. And we need both."

Acknowledging that disagreements understandably do exist within organized medicine, Dr. Chou encouraged colleagues to maintain respect for one another's commitment. "So when we disagree, question the argument, not the commitment of the person who's making it."

A board-certified family physician and fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians, Dr. Chou practices at Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Park Medical Center, where he has served as chief of the Family Medicine Department since 2018. He is also a partner in the Southern California Permanente Medical Group.

Dr. Chou served as speaker of CMA's House of Delegates from 2022 to 2025, following three years as vice speaker. He has represented the Los Angeles County Medical Association in the House since 2001 and previously served on CMA's Board of Trustees and Council on Ethical Affairs. He is also a past president of the California Academy of Family Physicians.

Raised in a small rural town in Taiwan, Dr. Chou earned his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Miami and his medical degree from the University of Southern California. He completed his family medicine residency at Kaiser Permanente Woodland Hills.



New CMA President, Jack Chou, M.D., addresses physicians during his inaugural speech.

"Optimism without experience gets burned. Experience without optimism stops fighting. And we need both."

–Jack Chou, M.D.



Outgoing CMA President Dr. René Bravo shakes hands with incoming President Dr. Chou during the presidential transition.

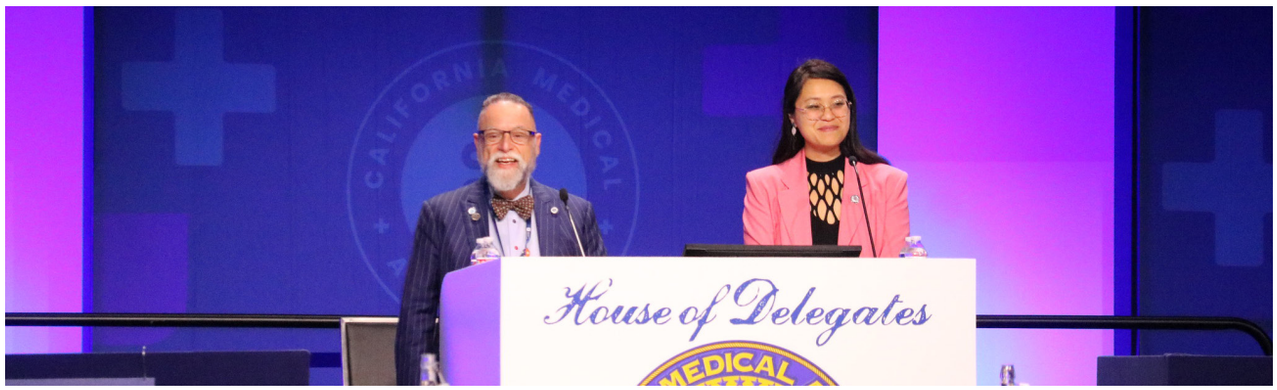
Dr. Sergio Flores Elected President-Elect

San Diego gastroenterologist **Sergio R. Flores, M.D.**, was elected CMA president-elect. He will serve in that role for one year before assuming the presidency at the conclusion of the 2027 House of Delegates.

A CMA member since 1986, Dr. Flores most recently served as chair of the Board of Trustees. Reflecting on approximately 20 years in the House, he thanked the delegations that supported his leadership and called for continued advocacy for physicians and patients, including working with the incoming gubernatorial administration to secure implementation of Proposition 35.

Board-certified in gastroenterology and internal medicine, Dr. Flores is a partner at San Diego Digestive Disease Consultants and president of Sharp Community Medical Group.





Dr. George Fouras and Dr. Anna Yap Reelected to Lead the House

Los Angeles psychiatrist **George Fouras, M.D.**, and Sacramento emergency physician Anna Yap, M.D., were reelected speaker and vice speaker of CMA's House of Delegates. Both were first elected to their current roles in 2025 and will continue guiding delegates' deliberations and policy development.

A CMA member since 1996, Dr. Fouras served in the CMA House of Delegates for more than a decade before becoming vice speaker and then speaker and has held many other leadership positions during his 30 years of membership. A past president of the San Francisco Marin Medical Society and two psychiatric societies, he has devoted much of his clinical career to mental health care for children in foster care.

Anna Yap, M.D., is an assistant professor of emergency medicine at UC Davis Health, where she directs the Health Policy and Administration Fellowship. She is a former CMA trustee and past chair of the Early Career Physicians Section and currently chairs the American Medical Association (AMA) Young Physicians Section Governing Council. Her work emphasizes mentorship and helping physicians become involved in advocacy and organized medicine.

Dr. Eric Hansen and Dr. Holly Yang to Lead the Board of Trustees

Hesperia family physician **Eric Hansen, D.O.**, was elected chair of CMA's Board of Trustees, succeeding Dr. Flores after serving as vice chair since 2023. San Diego hospice and palliative medicine specialist Holly Yang, M.D., was elected vice chair.

A CMA member since 2002, Dr. Hansen is a past president of the San Bernardino County Medical Society and past chair of CMA's Solo and Small Group Practice Forum. He also serves on the CMA Political Action Committee Board of Directors and the CMA Governance Technical Advisory Committee. Board-certified in family medicine, he is an independent physician with Choice Medical Group, where he also serves on the board.

A CMA member since 2001, **Holly Yang, M.D.**, has served as chair of the CMA Governance Technical Advisory Committee since 2020, guiding the organization through substantial reforms to modernize the House and strengthen member participation in policymaking. She is also a past president of the San Diego County Medical Society and the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and is currently a palliative medicine consultant at Scripps Health and co-director of the UC San Diego/ Scripps Health Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship Program.

New Executive Committee

THE FULL 2026–2027 CMA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE INCLUDES:



Jack Chou, M.D.
President



Sergio R. Flores, M.D.
President-Elect



Eric Hansen, D.O.
Chair, Board of Trustees



Holly Yang, M.D.
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees



George Fouras, M.D.
Speaker of the House



Anna Yap, M.D.
Vice Speaker of the House



René Bravo, M.D.
Immediate Past President

Read more about all of our CMA officers at cmadocs.org/executive-committee.

A Charge to Persevere

Outgoing President **René Bravo, M.D.**, left delegates with a direct charge: protect patients, strengthen the profession and defend science and truth.

"Persevere because the physicians who come after us will not judge us by whether our time was easy," Dr. Bravo said. "They will judge us by what we did when it was hard."

After leading CMA through a tumultuous year, Dr. Bravo emphasized that sustaining physician practices and protecting patients are inseparable. He urged physicians to preserve the rigorous education, ethics and accountability that underpin public trust while opening equitable pathways into medicine.

His message also challenged physicians to confront misinformation with evidence and compassion, remaining optimistic about the profession's ability to improve care despite the difficulties of the moment.

Outgoing Immediate Past President **Shannon Udovic-Constant, M.D.**, reflected on the relationships and shared purpose that sustain physician advocacy. Her parting message emphasized individual voices joined through collective action, intentional inclusion of diverse perspectives and the responsibility to make room for future leaders.

"We must continue to create spaces where all physicians feel welcomed, valued, and empowered to lead authentically," Dr. Udovic-Constant said.



"Persevere because the physicians who come after us will not judge us by whether our time was easy. They will judge us by what we did when it was hard."

–René Bravo, M.D.

Perspectives on Advocacy and Physician Leadership

Throughout the weekend, delegates heard from physician leaders and public officials about the challenges facing health care and the opportunities for organized medicine to shape solutions, perspectives and the responsibility to make room for future leaders.

Connecting State and National Advocacy

AMA Immediate Past Board Chair **David Aizuss, M.D.**, emphasized the importance of coordinated advocacy as decisions in Washington affect patient coverage, practice sustainability and access to physicians.

A past CMA president, Dr. Aizuss described how California physicians' experiences help shape AMA's national priorities. That partnership supports efforts to secure lasting Medicare payment reform, oppose inappropriate scope-of-practice expansions and limit coverage losses under H.R. 1.

"Advocacy is how we turn our experience at the bedside to action beyond the exam room."

–David Aizuss, M.D.

Bringing Physician Experience into Public Service

Physician political leadership was a central theme in remarks from pediatrician and current congressional candidate **Richard Pan, M.D.**, and former state senate candidate cardiologist **Sion Roy, M.D.**

Drawing on his experience in the state Legislature, Dr. Pan explained why physicians need a voice inside the rooms where lawmakers set priorities. He credited CMA advocacy with helping expand coverage and strengthen public health, urging physicians to continue speaking out for patients.

Dr. Roy shared lessons from his state senate campaign and thanked CMA members for their support. Despite the election outcome, he expressed renewed determination to work alongside physicians on behalf of patients and communities.

"Californians need us to lead, and together we will, together we must."

–Sion Roy, M.D.

A Commitment to Protecting Access to Care

Joining live via Zoom, gubernatorial candidate and former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary **Xavier Becerra** pledged to make California a backstop for health care and work with physicians to protect access to care for families across the state.

Becerra, who was joined by his wife, CMA member **Carolina Reyes, M.D.**, thanked CMA's physician leaders and staff for turning advocacy into results and shared his commitment to being California's "health care governor" if elected.

Honoring Service to Patients and the Profession

Dr. Robert Hartmann: Building the Future of Rural Care

Amador County internist **Robert C. Hartmann Jr., M.D.**, received CMA's 2026 Frederick K.M. Plessner Memorial Award, honoring the ethical standards and dedicated practice of rural medicine.

For nearly four decades, Dr. Hartmann has cared for patients across Amador County and the Sierra foothills, providing continuity of care in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, emergency departments and patients' homes.

He paused his semi-retirement to help launch the rural family medicine training program at Sutter Amador Hospital, co-authoring a successful $750,000 federal grant application and helping advance accreditation. He also secured philanthropic funding for resident housing. Several past residents have chosen to remain and practice in the community.

His service extends to unhoused veterans through the Victory Field Medicine Program, which connects patients with medical assessments, behavioral health support and housing resources.

Accepting the award, Dr. Hartmann called on physicians to strengthen the rural workforce – from encouraging young students to pursue science and health care to giving medical students and residents opportunities to live, train and become involved in rural communities.



2026 Plessner Award Winner, Robert C. Hartmann Jr., M.D., accepting his award.

Watch Dr. Hartmann's video profile at youtu.be/-sjsaHF7WkQ



2026 Compassionate Service Award Winner, Paul J. Dougherty, M.D., accepting his award.

Dr. Paul Dougherty: Restoring Sight and Expanding Access

Southern California ophthalmologist **Paul J. Dougherty, M.D.**, received CMA's 2026 Compassionate Service Award for his commitment to community and charity care.

For more than 30 years, Dr. Dougherty has provided free eye care and sight-restoring procedures to people who otherwise could not afford treatment. Following the death of his young son, Andrew, he established the Andrew Dougherty Vision Foundation to help eliminate treatable and preventable blindness.

The foundation's international outreach combines patient care with training for local clinicians and donated equipment so communities can sustain services after visiting teams leave. During a December 2025 mission to Morocco, the foundation's team treated more than 300 patients.

Closer to home, Dr. Dougherty supports uninsured and underinsured patients, people experiencing homelessness and veterans through partnerships with community organizations and pro bono care at his practice. His work reflects a commitment to making advances in vision care available to patients who might otherwise go without treatment.

Dr. David Granovetter: Supporting Physician Health

San Jose physician **David Granovetter, M.D.**, received CMA's 2026 Gary S. Nye Award for Physician Health and Wellness, recognizing outstanding contributions to improving physician health.

For more than two decades, Dr. Granovetter has helped strengthen support for physicians experiencing impairment, distress and burnout. As regional director for physician well-being for The Permanente Medical Group and longtime chair of the Physician Well Being Committee at Kaiser San Jose Medical Center, he coordinated the work of 15 committees serving more than 11,000 physicians across Northern California.

His contributions include educational resources, consultation on fitness-for-duty matters and structured processes that help organizations respond to physician health concerns with compassion while protecting patients.

Dr. Granovetter also serves on the board of California Public Protection and Physician Health and participates in the Federation of State Physician Health Programs. Across these roles, he has worked to reduce barriers to seeking help and advance approaches that prioritize rehabilitation over punishment.



2026 Gary Krieger Speaker's Award Winner, Roger Eng, M.D., accepting his award.

Dr. Roger Eng: Strengthening Governance and Mentorship

San Francisco physician **Roger Eng, M.D.**, received CMA's Gary Krieger Speaker's Award in recognition of 35 years of service to CMA and its House of Delegates.

His leadership has spanned sections, forums and committees, including the Young Physicians Section, Organized Medical Staff Section, Solo and Small Group Practice Forum and Ethnic Medical Organization Section. He has chaired Reference Committee C and the Council on Membership, Governance and Bylaws and served as vice chair of the Governance Technical Advisory Committee.

Throughout that work, colleagues have valued his ability to listen carefully, understand different perspectives and bring people together through significant changes to CMA's governance and House processes.

Dr. Eng's mentorship has also encouraged physicians to become more involved in organized medicine and pursue leadership roles. At Chinese Hospital, his commitment extends to mentoring medical students and supporting colleagues navigating difficult situations.

Dr. Seema Sidhu: Opening Doors for the Next Generation

The Early Career Physicians Section presented its 2026 Joseph F. Boyle, M.D., "Young at Heart" Award to **Seema Sidhu, M.D.**, recognizing her mentorship and advocacy for students, residents, fellows and early-career physicians.

A CMA trustee and past president of the Santa Clara County Medical Association, Dr. Sidhu has helped emerging physician leaders find opportunities in education, advocacy and organized medicine. Her service also includes the AMA Council on Medical Education.

Dr. Sidhu serves as assistant physician-in-chief of medical education for Kaiser Permanente's Greater Southern Alameda area and associate dean for Drexel University College of Medicine. Across these roles, she has made teaching and mentorship central to her work.

Accepting the award, Dr. Sidhu emphasized the importance of believing in others before they fully recognize their own potential. "You are the future of this organization and this profession, and I know we're in good hands."

Reflecting afterward, she wrote, "Mentoring the next generation has been one of the greatest joys of my career."

Supporting Political Advocacy

Physicians Raise More Than $292,000 for CALPAC at House of Delegates

CMA's political action committee (CALPAC) raised more than $292,000 at CMA's 155th House of Delegates, launching its new membership year with strong support from physicians across the state.

Five delegations – community health centers and geographic Districts 1, 2, 4 and 10 – achieved 100% participation among their delegates and alternates. Districts 4 and 10 also nearly doubled their participation compared with previous years.

Two delegations earned CALPAC's coveted Victory Bell awards, recognizing outstanding fundraising achievements among delegations with 100% participation. District 2 received the award for the highest total contributions, while District 1 earned the award for the highest average contribution. District 8 also distinguished itself, raising more than $28,500.

Why Give to CALPAC?

Contributions to CALPAC support CMA's political advocacy by helping elect physicians to public office, supporting candidates who share CMA's vision for the future of health care and educating elected officials on issues affecting physicians and their patients.

"A strong CALPAC ensures physicians are real advocates for our patients and our profession," said newly seated CALPAC Chair Valencia P. Walker, M.D. "Every contribution helps put physicians at the table when decisions are made about health care in California. The participation and generosity at this year's House of Delegates are a powerful endorsement of what we can accomplish when we invest in our collective voice."

Stay Involved with CMA

The House of Delegates meets annually, but advocacy continues year-round. Physicians can stay engaged by volunteering, serving on councils and committees, contributing to grassroots campaigns, and supporting CALPAC.

Learn more about engagement opportunities at cmadocs.org/opportunities.

Thank you to our delegates

CMA thanks the physicians, residents and medical students who took time away from their practices, training and families to serve as delegates and alternates. Their willingness to share their experiences, weigh different perspectives and work together helps shape the future of medicine. We look forward to seeing everyone in Los Angeles for the 2027 House of Delegates, Oct. 23–24.

Around the House



More Moments from the House

Explore CMA's Flickr album for more highlights from the weekend, including policy discussions, award presentations and celebrations with colleagues.

flic.kr/s/aHBqjD7ZW4

House of Delegates