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## **AB 834 to the Governor’s Desk, Will Enhance Podiatric Patient Care**

**SACRAMENTO** – Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin successfully passed legislation this week designed to improve patient care by allowing podiatrists and physicians to be on equal footing in medical practices.

Assembly Bill (AB) 834 received unanimous bipartisan support during its passage on both the Senate and Assembly Floors and is now set for consideration by the Governor. AB 834 seeks to establish partnership parity between podiatrists and Medical Doctors (MDs) or Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine (DOs), granting podiatrists the opportunity to hold equal or majority partnership status in their businesses. This legislation is intended to foster optimal patient care and afford DPMs, DOs, and MDs the flexibility to mutually determine the most beneficial terms for their ventures.

Since its inception in 1965, the Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME) has been responsible for the formal accreditation of podiatric medicine residency programs. The evolution of podiatric training has resulted in standardized, mandatory three-year residency programs following the educational path of medical doctors (MDs) under the 4-4-3 model – encompassing four years of undergraduate education, followed by four years of podiatric medical school, and culminating in three years of residency training, with an optional additional fellowship year.

“Medical practices often bring together different specialties to provide more holistic care to patients,” said Assemblymember Irwin. “Despite their extensive training, Doctors of Podiatric Medicine are unfairly prevented from partnering with physicians when they agree to form a practice. This bill would remove this impediment and allows podiatrists and physicians to have equal ownership in medical practices.”

AB 834 was sponsored by the California Podiatric Medical Association to remove requirements in state law limiting podiatric practice ownership. “There is no reason why a group of three podiatric surgeons who wanted to open a wound care center and partner with a vascular surgeon should give the vascular surgeon 51% ownership of the center just to comply with this archaic law,” said Dr. Holly Spohn-Gross, DPM and immediate past president for California Podiatric Medical Association. She further added, “Managing a podiatric practice is no different from managing any other MD or DO surgical specialty practice. Anything that impacts medical practice will always impact the podiatric practice in the same way. Given the realities of how podiatrists and MD/DO coexist, restricting the size of the ownership interest in a professional partnership between a physician and surgeon and a podiatrist doesn’t make sense.”

*Governor Newsom has 12 days to sign, approve without signing, or veto a bill once it has been enrolled and received by his office.*

*Assemblymember Irwin’s website: <https://a42.asmdc.org>*

*Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin represents California’s 42nd Assembly District, which includes portions of both Ventura and Los Angeles Counties; including all of Agoura Hills, Bel Air, Beverly Glen, Brentwood, Casa Conejo, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Malibu, Moorpark, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Santa Susana, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Topanga, Westlake Village, and portions of Camarillo.*