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Label, Norman

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response is direct and simple: on Friday March 15th, 2002, at 2:30pm John Christiansen, MD, FAAEM, from the Board of CAL/AAEM and ACHP, will be the guest speaker at the CAL/AAEM Business Forum during the AAEM Scientific Assembly at the Hyatt Regency in San Francisco. He will be giving us all an update describing the outcome and much of the detail of the CHW-ACHP lawsuit. I wish to respectfully invite the letter's writer or his designee to be our second official speaker during that open forum, to present his view, to answer direct questions, and to ask his own. Through open disclosure, we can put many of the questions I raised to rest.

I wish to thank you all for your support over the last two years. In particular, I wish to thank Paul Windham, Ramon Johnson, Fred Dennis, Drew Fenton, Roneet Lev, Kay Whalen, John Bibb, Dan Higgins, Loren Johnson, William Durkin, Sheila Virgin, Karen Thibodeau, John Christiansen, Wesley Fields, Howard Davis, Paul Kivela, Wesley Curry, Brian Potts, Boris Lubavin, Scott Weiner, Scott Rudkin, Melissa Jacobs, Miguel Alvarez, Jeannie Tsai, Catherine Park and Sabrina Pak. Most of all, I wish to thank my friends and colleagues Peter Rosen, Robert Derlet and Mark Langdorf for their consistent inspiring support, friendship and guidance. Of course, I could not name everyone who helped. However, I am indebted to the current board members and past leadership of CAL/AAEM, AAEM and CAL/ACEP for their confidence and support, even during the heat of the most controversial moments. Without your confidence in my vision and genuine motivation to do what is best for EM, and even without the negativity of the most controversial moments, our collaborative activity in California would have never been possible. To all of you, thank you.

Of course, yes, as I conclude this last message as CAL/AAEM President, I choose not to end it with a sad note. I choose to launch us all on a new challenge. CAL/AAEM invites all our members and CaJEM readers to take a close look at the 2002 CAL/ACEP-led ballot initiative. This is "our" initiative. We – CAL/AAEM – support it. We participated directly and indirectly in its birth, and should assume the responsibility that it entails. We, Emergency Medicine, are embarking on a major legislative challenge that will need the support of every single one of you. Please take a close look at the detail of this initiative in the "Legislative Update" in this issue, and contribute to the "Ballot Initiative Fund" with \$500 per Emergency Physician. Read the detail, understand the issue, feel free to contact Paul Windham or me and to ask us any questions you have. Most of all, take a stand, contribute to the fund, and let us win – together – our right to citizenship in Emergency Medicine. Let us win – united – this historical battle!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Dr. Kazzi:

I was disappointed to read your President's Message in the July 2001 issue of the California Journal of Emergency Medicine. As President of CAL/AAEM, you have a responsibility to your members to avoid authoring a message based on conjecture and false information. On many occasions, you have written and spoken of the importance of fairness in emergency medicine. You did not extend that courtesy to Emergency Physicians' Medical Group. By not contacting the leadership of EPMG to obtain a balanced view, you performed a disservice to your membership and the integrity of your organization. In fact, the purchase price for the three medical groups to secure the assets of Meriten was only a fraction of your quoted figure. There was full support from EPMG's shareholders – physician and mid level providers – for this transaction.

EPMG continues to attract high quality, residency trained emergency physicians for many reasons, including those that you noted:

"...EPMG has always provided (and will continue to) many core attributes that procure more fairness to its physicians than most other groups out there."

EPMG is proud to have broad-based physician and midlevel ownership, democratic governance, and open-book finances with fair and equitable scheduling and compensation systems. Additionally, EPMG has made a substantial commitment to emergency medicine leadership, education and the professional development of its health care providers.

Dr. Kazzi, as evidenced by your active involvement in CAL-ACEP, I know that you recognize the importance of unifying all of California's emergency physicians in order to take on the challenges that seriously threaten our specialty including ED overcrowding and uncompensated care. It is much more important that we agree to continue to work together for the benefit of our physicians, mid level providers and patients than to make unsubstantiated judgments about our respective business practices.

Sincerely,

Norman Label, MD
President
Emergency Physicians' Medical Group
Roseville, CA