

# McCulley & Associates, Inc.

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## **Legislative Report to American Academy of Orthotics and Prosthetics NYS Chapter**

**January 2007**

With the end of 2006 came the beginning of a new era at the State Capitol. Former State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer took office on January 1. Spitzer, a Democrat, succeeds Republican George Pataki, who occupied the Governor's mansion for the past twelve years. As the Pataki administration came to a close many around the capitol are hopeful that Governor Spitzer will energize state government.

### **Licensure**

AAOP's licensure efforts are moving forward. We have completed a draft legislative proposal that will require licensure of orthotists, prosthetists and pedorthists. This law is modeled on licensure legislation passed in the other states, including Florida.

Our next step will be to secure a sponsor in the Republican-controlled State Senate and the Democrat controlled State Assembly. On January 4<sup>th</sup>, Governor Spitzer presented his first State of the State Address to a joint session of the State Legislature, signaling the beginning of the 2007-2008 Legislative Session.

In the next weeks we will be meeting with potential sponsors for the licensure bill. By mid-January we should have a sponsor for the licensure bill in both houses of the state Legislature.

One development that will impact our decision about who will be the Assembly sponsor is the election of former Higher Education Committee Chairman Ron Canestrari (D-Capital District) as the new Majority Leader of the State Assembly. The licensure bill will likely be considered by the Higher Education Committee and it would be helpful if the Chair of the Committee was the bill's sponsor. We will have to wait at least a week to see who Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan) appoints as the committee's new chair to replace Assemblyman Canestrari.

Once the bill has been introduced and assigned a number we can begin lobbying in earnest for its passage. This will include meetings with the State Education Department, individual legislators and any groups that may oppose licensure.

## **Bill Monitoring**

In addition to licensure efforts, we will continue to monitor legislation introduced in the Legislature. Over a two year legislative session more than 10,000 bills are introduced in the Senate and Assembly. With the new two year session beginning on January 4<sup>th</sup> there have already been more than 700 bills introduced in the Assembly alone.

Last session several bills were introduced on behalf of other licensed health care providers attempting to expand their scope of practice to include Orthotic and Prosthetic care. While these bills have not yet been re-introduced in the 2007-08 Session, it is likely they will be and we will be keeping a close eye out for them. It will be important for AAOP-NYS to be aware of these bills and to notify legislators or the organization's position on any and all bills that impact the practice of O & P.