



# NEWS RELEASE

International Chiropractors Association

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## **ICA's OPPOSITION TO "PACE" REMAINS UNCHANGED**

The International Chiropractors Association (ICA), reflecting what the Association believes to be the position of the vast majority of doctors of chiropractic in active practice in the United States, continues to oppose the implementation of the so-called "PACE" program being promoted by the Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards (FCLB). Despite an on-going dialogue with some of ICA's leaders, and a few modifications in language and procedure, the basic nature of the "PACE" initiative remains unchanged. ICA has called for the complete abandonment of the initiative.

The institutionalization of the administration and control of an educational function directly related to the re-licensure of practicing Doctors of Chiropractic in an organization of non-elected individuals is a dangerous precedent. The promulgation of any rules or regulations, directly or indirectly related to the process of re-licensure, should be subject to the open public processes of legislation and rulemaking. These processes are only available within the jurisdiction of the states or the federal government. The long term potential for abuse of an extra-legal means of influencing the practice of chiropractic far outweighs the short term benefit of centralized administration.

"PACE" represents an unnecessary, unregulated, undemocratic and inherently unaccountable new layer of control on a profession already under heavy pressure. Despite assurances from "PACE" spokespersons of the good intent of the program, ICA has no confidence in the ability of any non-governmental organization, especially one comprised of self-selected individuals who have a long history of promoting one chiropractic paradigm, to the exclusion of others, to fairly and responsibly execute a control function that can only rightfully reside in the hands of the states.

Among ICA's top concerns are:

- The initiative will add significantly to the cost of chiropractic postgraduate education, all of which will be passed on to the doctor in the field.
- The economic price will be especially painful to the chiropractic colleges, state associations, postgraduate councils and continuing education providers.

- This proposal appears to represent a completely unwarranted tax on doctors in practice, not to mention another layer of bureaucratic and financial demands on educators and educational institutions.
- No evidence can be identified that indicates in any way that the quality of clinical practice or other professional elements will be enhanced through this cumbersome and expensive system.
- The entrepreneurial aspects of the initiative in the interests of the FCLB should not be obscured or minimized by anybody considering this proposal. In this evaluation process, it is vital to consider whether the economic costs to the profession, levied in the form of obligatory added costs for continuing education, to the sole benefit of the FCLB, are in the profession's best interests.
- The potential restrictions and limitations to the free exchange of ideas inherent in the proposed approval process.
- The issue of examinations following seminars is especially problematic for the doctor in the field both because of the cost and because of the lack of any evidence to indicate that such a burden adds anything of substance to the educational experience.
- There is no basis for the argument that the "PACE" system would in any way enhance chiropractic's political status or positive profile.

ICA recognizes the reluctance of those individuals who have devoted so much time and effort, which ICA does not doubt has been well intended and in good faith, to consider abandoning the "PACE" project. There are, however, no circumstances under which the "PACE" concept can be made palatable to the doctor in the field. The lack of any credible mechanism of accountability alone is sufficient grounds for ICA to call for its termination.

ICA has an obligation to present its position clearly and emphatically. That position, that "PACE" is simply not in the chiropractic profession's best interests, has been developed after careful study of all aspects of the project. It is not the product of any misunderstanding or lack of data, nor should the discussions with ICA members in previous years be represented (or misrepresented) as ICA approval, assent or encouragement.

ICA urges all state chiropractic board representatives, educational institutions, independent educators and postgraduate councils to reject the "PACE" initiative.

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