

The VA Subluxation Issue: Correcting the Record



JAMES D. EDWARDS, DC

In a recent ICA publication, ICA Legislative Committee Chairman Michael McLean, DC, sent an "Open Letter" to the profession and me that *grossly misrepresented facts and incorrectly reported legislative events.*

Primary among those misrepresentations were Dr. McLean's strong insinuations that the ACA does not support the "subluxation." It is important for the chiropractic profession to know the following:

The official policies of the ACA reference the "subluxation" *multiple times* and define "subluxation" in great detail. It's also important to note that the ACA and ICA official policies regarding "subluxation" are essentially *identical to each other.*

The ACA House of Delegates passed an official policy (September 2000) that "reaffirms

the core principle of subluxation"; it states that the subluxation principle *should be reiterated in federal legislative efforts*; and references to subluxation should be included in ACA releases whenever possible.

The ACA has officially endorsed the ACC Paradigm that includes an entire section (4.0) that defines and describes "The Subluxation" in detail.

The ACA filed and funded a federal lawsuit against the federal government to ensure that *only chiropractors would be authorized to correct subluxations* under Medicare...yet the ICA has not contributed a single dollar to this important subluxation protection effort.

Without question, these ACA subluxation actions speak louder than Dr. McLean's words.

And when it comes to Dr. McLean's statement that the ICA backed out of their written agreement because my former congressman introduced a VA bill without "subluxation" included, the ICA and he are just dead wrong. Here are the documented facts that can be verified by accessing the U.S. Congress Web site at <http://thomas.loc.gov/bss/d107query.html> and searching for "HR 3447."

On Aug. 2, 2001, Congressman Jerry Moran (KS-1) did indeed introduce a VA bill (HR 2792), but it did *not* include any provisions relative to chiropractic and was introduced 30 days *before the agreement between the WCA, ICA, and ACA was even reached!*

When HR 2792 was amended (reported) by the full committee to include the chiropractic provision (Oct. 16, 2001), the word "subluxation" had been removed. However, it was *not* Congressman Moran who submitted that language, as Dr. McLean alleged. Instead, the language was submitted by the *Committee on Veterans' Affairs!*

And finally, the word "subluxation" was included in the VA bill that ultimately became law (HR 3447 introduced by Congressman Christopher Smith on Dec. 11, 2001) *only because of the political clout and steadfast efforts of the ACA* when the issue reached the U.S. Senate, and later in the Joint Conference Committee!

Although Dr. McLean's remarks were in my opinion misleading to the profession, perhaps some good can come from all of this. His inaccurate statements are a case in point for why the ACA wisely decided to forego further joint legislative efforts with the ICA and *why a merger of the ACA and ICA is so badly needed.*

Current ACA President Dr. Daryl Wills and I have gone on record that *we would both step aside* from our ACA leadership positions if it would result in professional unity. Once the top ICA leaders are also willing to subordinate their political positions for the good of the profession, a merger of the ACA and ICA can and will occur. And once that merger takes place, reasoned debate among chiropractic leaders will yield agree-

ments on important issues, the self-serving public rhetoric will end, and this profession can move forward. *The ACA looks forward to that day.*

Although the ACA has achieved many victories for our profession, there is much more that needs to

be accomplished at the national level. Due to that overriding priority and responsibility, the ACA will continue to focus its time and energy on defending this profession from our *external enemies* and will only respond to *internal attacks* when facts are misrepre-

sented in an attempt to mislead the profession. ▼

Dr. Edwards can be contacted at JamesEdwards@JamesEdwards.com.

ATTENTION MEMBERS: Deadlines for ACA Amendments, Resolutions, and Position Papers

There will be an annual meeting of the House of Delegates Sept. 18-20 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Proposed amendments to the ACA bylaws must be submitted to the ACA corporate secretary at least sixty (60) days prior to the meeting. Deadline for receipt of proposed amendments to bylaws is **July 18, 2003**.

Proposed resolutions must be sent to the ACA corporate secretary at least forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting (Article VIII, Section J.4, except as provided in Section J.5). Deadline for receipt of proposed resolutions is **Aug. 5, 2003**.

Position papers are long policy statements or opinion papers. They are to be sent to the chairman of the papers review committee or ACA secretary ninety (90) days prior to an annual meeting (ACA Standing Rule XII, except as provided in Section D(5)) with background information to substantiate the position taken on the issue. Deadline for receipt of position papers is **June 20, 2003**.

All officers of the ACA, the board of governors, the executive officers, the department heads, the councils, the committees, and the commissions must file written reports of the year's activities. The reports must be submitted to the ACA secretary at least forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting (Article V, Section C). Deadline for receipt of reports is **Aug. 5, 2003**.

A preparation kit for revisions is available by calling the ACA legal department at 800/986-4636. Ask for the "Bylaws and Resolutions Revisions Kit." The kit includes the appropriate criteria with examples. All submissions are to be double spaced and submitted on a Microsoft-compatible disk (preferably MS Word) and accompanied by a hard copy.

Garrett F. Cuneo
ACA Corporate Secretary