

March 23, 2020

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To: Congress of Delegates

From: Board of Governors

As you are acutely aware, as a nation, profession and association we are facing a crisis like we have never seen before with COVID-19. We are in uncertain times and have needed to make important and difficult decisions over the last two weeks. Canceling the Annual Convention, and Congress of Delegates as a result, ranks as one of our most trying decisions.

During an emergency Board of Governors meeting on March 11th, we had a pressing decision to make in light of Congress being canceled – the composition of our 2020-21 Board officers and governors. After thoughtful deliberation, the entire Board of Governors collectively requested that Robert C. DeLuca, DO, FACOFP *dist.*, ACOFP President and Nicole H. Bixler, DO, FACOFP split the term of ACOFP President in 2020-21. Both leaders have graciously accepted this request. We then unanimously passed a motion for our legal counsel to draft a temporary bylaws amendment that will only be in effect until Congress reconvenes in March 2021. We propose keeping our board in place for the coming year, with the exception of the Student and Resident Governors who are graduating. Now we need *your* help.

There are many reasons we took this action and are asking for the support of our Congress of Delegates:

- The extreme circumstances we face as a country and organization requires consistency in leadership. The full consequences of COVID-19 are unknown at this time and it will be several months or more before we have a better understanding of the full impact this will have on ACOFP and our profession. Changing Presidents at this critical juncture will be disruptive and inefficient given the ongoing work Dr. DeLuca is already leading.
- Similarly, given the upcoming financial needs, and potential challenges, with insurance claims and budget adjustments, it is not prudent to switch to a new treasurer who has yet to serve on the Finance Committee. We feel consistency in financial leadership is of critical importance under the service of ACOFP Secretary/Treasurer Bruce Williams, DO, FACOFP.
- All travel has been canceled for the President, and all of the Board, for the first three months of this term year and more cancelations may still occur. Dr. Bixler would not truly have a full year to lead ACOFP in the capacity of President under these unfortunate circumstances. Our organization deserves a full year with her as our leader.
- The new governor nominated by the Nominating Committee, Derrick J. Sorweide, DO, FACOFP, learned he is being deployed for military service through August and will miss half of his first term. It would be unfortunate for ACOFP to not have his participation while serving our country.

We hope that our unity in this matter and unwavering commitment to serve as needed for ACOFP gives you comfort and a source of pride during these trying times. Families that stick together, stay together, and we are confident that our Osteopathic heritage, flexibility and nimbleness will help us prevail stronger than we were before.