

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

May 17, 2025

TO: HOUSE OF DELEGATES
TENNESSEE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

SUBMITTED BY: LANDON S. COMBS, MD, PRESIDENT

“Every high civilization decays by forgetting obvious things.”

— G.K. Chesterton

I started my tenure as the 170th President of our Tennessee Medical Association (TMA) with this quote and I want to end with it as well as some others that are applicable to my year as your President. It has been an exciting year with multiple changes from a new President and Congress to almost daily changes in government regulations and departments. We remain diligently working to avert another cut in Medicare and continue to work within the system on long-term goal of Medicare solvency. Through all this change we have worked together - consolidated in goals and priorities – and have proven to those watching that we are united in purpose and that together WE ARE TMA.

“How you think when you lose, determines how long it will be until you win.”

— G.K. Chesterton

I am grateful to say that we accomplished numerous goals which have already been covered by others in their reports. And even when things did not go as planned, we reevaluated the opportunity, remained positive and pivoted together as one group to stand up for what is best for our patients, our colleagues, and our state. For me, I am happy to say that we have continued to move forward and have not forgotten the obvious things. Through it all, we have continued to work together and shown that we are resilient and will always be a winning force to both influence and pursue that which guarantees care and access for all the citizens of Tennessee.

“I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live up to what light I have.”

- Abraham Lincoln

As we look forward to the year ahead, and the completion of the Legislative session, we will continue work on those items from the first part of the Legislative session that are in summer study (Psychologist Prescribing, Childhood Immunizations) as well as those which are deferred to the 2026 session (Abortion-Inducing drugs, TennCare Coverage based on Vaccination Status, Inquiries of Gun Ownership). It is also important to continue collaborating with our legislators to help improve access to care for patients by working with

1 them on the Tennessee Medicaid Modernization and Access Act of 2025. Above all we will
2 continue to be bound by our guiding light of ensuring the best patient care.

3
4 **"It isn't that they can't see the solution. It is that they can't see the problem."**

5 **— G.K. Chesterton**

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7 We had an excellent turnout for Day on the Hill this year with a considerable number of
8 physicians, residents, and students in attendance. During the day, TMA groups met with their
9 legislators, provided information, and discussed the bills which were significant for
10 improving care for patients across the spectrum and to improve access to care for all. As
11 always, the legislators were appreciative of the information shared and respectful to us.
12 These visits helped influence passage of several bills which could have otherwise faltered. I
13 want to thank everyone who attended and encourage everyone who can, to attend next
14 year. I received multiple positive comments about the number of physicians, residents, and
15 students in attendance and I feel that this had a positive effect in many of our meetings. We
16 also have our legislative team to thank for their hard work during this session and for the
17 work they will put in between sessions to help maintain the progress we have made.
18 Together we helped our legislators see the problem and some solutions.

19
20 **"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity."**

21 **-Proverbs 17:17**

22
23 WE ARE TMA! We are both friends and brothers and sisters in the Tennessee House of
24 Medicine.

25
26 It has become a mantra in a way. Over my year as President, I have considered this as a
27 guiding principle, a personal motto, and a belief that has helped to shape my approach and
28 responses to events that have taken place. I hope it has helped others to focus their mind,
29 help express their beliefs and inspire positive changes. I also hope that it has brought us
30 closer together as a group if not a family who will continue to work together for the
31 betterment of medicine in our state for our patients and colleagues. This closeness not only
32 applies internally, but also externally. TMA has strengthened our relationships with other
33 medical societies and improved relationships with many other groups relevant to our causes.
34 This will help us continue to move forward and enable us to accomplish future work which
35 lies ahead.

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37 During my term, I have worked to help improve physician wellness through our own wellness
38 committee as well as other organizations which evaluate ways to aid with charting,
39 documentation, and coding guidelines. My goal is to continue working on this issue to help
40 decrease physician stress even after my term ends. The old saying "Physician heal thy self"
41 is true in that we must collectively work on all aspects of our health to ensure the best care
42 for our patients.

1 TMA has a long-storied history, and this year is celebrating its 195th year- only five years
2 away from our Bicentennial. Our 10,000-plus member strength is solid and well known
3 throughout the United States. During my term as President, I have had the privilege to
4 represent TMA on multiple stages – from other state society meetings (Kentucky and South
5 Carolina) to meeting with our representatives and senators in Washington. Meeting with
6 other states’ delegations also provided insight into how we all have similar problems and
7 how others are approaching these. I look forward to our continued commitment to
8 maintaining these relationships because together we are stronger.

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10 Again, I am honored to have been able to represent you on the local, state, and national
11 stage over the past year. As I prepare to turn over the reins to Dr. McCarley, I can look back
12 with happiness and satisfaction for all we have been able to accomplish this year and how
13 strong and united we are as a medical association. My final request as President is for
14 everyone to remember that while we may differ in viewpoints, that, we are family and will
15 always be there to support each other. Because alone, we are individuals, but together WE
16 ARE TMA.

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18 **Thank you and God bless you.**

Respectfully submitted,

Landon S. Combs, MD
President