

1849 The Exchange
Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30339
678.303.9290
800.282.0224
Fax 678.303.3732
www.mag.org



Medical
Association
of Georgia

Building a Better State of Health Since 1849

For Immediate Release

**MAG Praises General Assembly
For Passage of Several Health Care Bills;
Disappointed In Failure to Fund Statewide Trauma Care Network**

ATLANTA (April 7, 2008) – The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) praised the Georgia General Assembly for passing several health care bills that will have a positive impact on patient care and reduced cost for all Georgians. “The legislature showed substantial leadership in addressing several key issues related to the uninsured, reform of certificate laws and addressing Medicaid Program issues” said MAG President Jack Chapman. However, Chapman did express “disappointment at the legislature’s failure to provide funding of a badly-needed statewide trauma care network.”

Chapman, who heads the state’s largest physician organization, notes MAG “is one of the architects, along with members of a wide-ranging healthcare coalition, which worked to pass legislation addressing the growing number of uninsured Georgians.” Passage of HB 977, he said, “should provide affordable market coverage to more than 500,000 currently uninsured Georgians. It expands the use of high-deductible savings account plans to attract the uninsured and, in addition to the obvious health care benefits, the package provides an economic stimulus of nearly \$2 billion to our state’s economy.”

“HB 977 focuses on rewarding and providing financial incentives to those making healthy living choices and participating in wellness and early intervention programs. As a result of the free-market system, more Georgia citizens will have the opportunity to purchase their own health care coverage,” Chapman added.

Chapman also praised passage of “comprehensive reform of the anti-free market Certificate of Need law which, among other things, will help general surgeons open ambulatory surgery centers and will let hospitals build parking decks and other non-clinical projects without state bureaucratic approval.” He further lauded legislators for “fending off challenges to Georgia’s tort reform law by retaining the cap on non-economic damages and the standard of proof for services rendered in the emergency room.”

“All in all, with the exception of failure to fund an effective statewide trauma care system,” Chapman said, “Georgia patients and health care providers were well-served during the legislative session.”

For media interviews with Dr. Chapman, call Phil Kent at 404.226.3549.

###