

## MCARE TIMELINE 2007-2008

<b>Mid-February 2007</b>	POS President Chip Hummer distributes POS legislative agenda which highlights need for keeping Mcare levels current 50/50 split, renewal of Mcare Abatement Program for 2008 and finding a dedicated funding source for retiring Mcare's unfunded liability.
<b>June 5, 2007</b>	POS sends letter to Governor and Deputy Insurance Commissioner requesting no change to primary insurance levels and also requests Mcare Abatement renewal in 2008.
<b>July 20, 2007</b>	Deputy Insurance Commissioner declares stay on primary insurance levels.
<b>Early October 2007</b>	Mcare Information page added to POS website. Includes message from POS President Chip Hummer indicating need for advocacy for Mcare Abatement.
<b>October 5, 2007</b>	POS initiates Mcare countdown in weekly email.
<b>October 23, 2007</b>	Sen. D. White introduces SB 1137 – this bill would renew Mcare Abatement Program for one year, but contains provision to divert Mcare revenue and surplus to hospital-based programs.
<b>October 24, 2007</b>	SB 1137 reported from Senate Banking and Insurance Committee.
<b>October 25, 2007</b>	Rep. Shapiro introduces HB 1973 – this bill would renew the Mcare Abatement Program for one year and would condition abatement on physicians' payment of state taxes and participation in a pharmaceutical awareness program.
<b>October 29, 2007</b>	POS issues letter to Senate opposing SB 1137 and urges Senate to preserve Mcare revenue and surplus for abatement and retirement of unfunded liability.
<b>October 30, 2007</b>	Senate passes SB 1137.
<b>November 6, 2007</b>	"Save the Surplus" Campaign begins, orthopaedic residents send letter to House members. POS issues Call to Action asking members to request their state Representative to continue Mcare Abatement and to save the surplus for Mcare Abatement and retiring the Mcare Fund's unfunded liability.
<b>November 7, 2007</b>	POS board meets and affirms positions to support Mcare abatement renewal and preservation of Mcare surplus for abatement and retirement of unfunded liability.
<b>November 13, 2007</b>	POS issues letter to House Insurance Committee regarding HB 1973 and supporting continued Mcare abatement. POS issues Call to Action asking members to request their state Representative to extend the current Mcare Abatement program in 2008 and to save the surplus for Mcare Abatement and retiring the Mcare Fund's unfunded liability.
<b>November 14, 2007</b>	POS issues letter to Gov. Rendell requesting 2008 Mcar Abatement and dedication of the surplus to retiring the Mcare Fund's unfunded liability.
<b>November 14-19, 2007</b>	POS President Jon Tucker, POS lobbyist Jonathan Bigley as well as representatives of HAP and PMS met with Governor Rendell and his cabinet. Governor Rendell requests support for CAP funding mechanism.
<b>November 20, 2007</b>	HB 1973 reported from House Insurance Committee with support from POS.
<b>December 3, 2007</b>	POS issues Call to Action asking members to contact their state Representative, thank them for their past support of Mcare Abatement, to support HB 1973, and to save the surplus for Mcare Abatement surplus and retiring the Mcare Fund's unfunded liability.

<b>December 4, 2007</b>	Governor Rendell holds press conference outlining CAP funding models and calls on General Assembly to engage in meaningful discussions to find solutions to Mcare abatement and to provide healthcare insurance to the uninsured. Rep. Eachus announces amendment to SB 1137 that would condition continued Mcare abatement on the General Assembly's adoption of legislation to create and fund a healthcare insurance program. In response to reporter's question, Governor Rendell issues veto threat against SB 1137 in its Senate-passed form.
<b>December 5, 2007</b>	House Insurance Committee chairmen announce agreement to work together to resolve Mcare abatement and insurance program funding mechanism. Committee adopts amendment, but declares that amended bill will not be the final version. POS issues press release praising House Democrats and Republicans for their willingness to work together to resolve the issues of Mcare abatement, Mcare retirement and insurance for the uninsured.
<b>December 10, 2007</b>	Senate Appropriations Committee amends HB 489 with language of Senate-passed version of SB 1137.
<b>December 11, 2007</b>	Full Senate passes amended version of HB 489 - this is the language that Governor Rendell already stated he would veto. POS called on all four caucuses in PA General Assembly and the Governor to begin productive discussions to enact Mcare Abatement for 2008 and reserve surplus Mcare funds for retirement of the fund and future abatement.
<b>December 12, 2007</b>	Both the Senate and the House adjourned for the holiday break. Governor Rendell and leaders in the House and Senate all agree for the need to continue the Mcare Abatement Program as critical for keeping high-risk specialty surgeons practicing in Pennsylvania. The dispute centers on the use of the surplus in the fund. Media reports indicate Governor Rendell is willing to defer 2008 Mcare assessment until April, 2008. General Assembly recesses without renewing Mcare Abatement Program.
<b>December 18, 2007</b>	POS President issues letter to Governor Rendell in support of his proposal for 10 year Mcare Abatement and CAP with the caveat that retirement of the Mcare Fund be included in the proposal.
<b>December 19, 2007</b>	POS distributes December 18 <sup>th</sup> letter to the General Assembly.
<b>December 21, 2007</b>	Governor Rendell defers collection of Mcare surcharge until March 31 <sup>st</sup> . Governor Rendell links Mcare Abatement Program to CAP.
<b>January 14, 2008</b>	Governor Rendell holds press conference at PCOM in support of Mcare Abatement Program and CAP. POS Legislative Chair Dick Schmidt implores the General Assembly to end the gridlock.
<b>January 28, 2008</b>	POS President Jon Tucker issues letter to POS detailing the Society's support of ten-year Mcare Abatement, retirement of the Mcare Fund, and CAP.
<b>January 29, 2008</b>	POS President Jon Tucker issues opinion letter to statewide media.
<b>January 31, 2008</b>	POS President Jon Tucker, Past-President Chip Hummer and lobbyist Jonathan Bigley meet with PMS President Peter Lund, PMS Executive Director Roger Mecum, and the PMS lobbying staff in an effort to find common ground on multi-year Mcare Abatement, retirement of the Mcare Fund and health care insurance for the uninsured.
<b>February 3, 2008</b>	Scranton Times publishes Dr. Tucker Op-Ed.
<b>February 8, 2008</b>	POS Board of Directors sets strategy to ensure Insurance Department refund of Mcare Assessments of Mcare Abatement Program is renewed after March 31 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>February 10, 2008</b>	Harrisburg Patriot publishes Dr. Tucker Op-Ed.

<b>February 15, 2008</b>	AAOS Now publishes article on Mcare by Beth Weachter.
<b>February, 20, 2008</b>	Jonathan Bigley meets with PMS lobbying staff to discuss models developed as a result of the January 31 <sup>st</sup> meeting.
<b>February 26, 2008</b>	This week Pennsylvania acting Insurance Commissioner Joel Ario announced at a Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing that <b>if the Mcare Abatement Program is renewed after March 31st</b> , the Insurance Department will "promptly refund" directly to physicians any Mcare surcharges collected.
<b>March 3, 2008</b>	POS President Jon Tucker meets (via telephone), Beth Weachter and Jonathan Bigley with Healthcare Reform Director Rosemarie Greco to discuss Mcare Abatement/retirement/healthcare insurance model known as the 10 year incremental plan.
<b>March 4, 2008</b>	Beth Weachter and Jonathan Bigley meet with Roger Mecum and PMS's lobbying staff to discuss 10 year incremental plan.
<b>March 5, 2008</b>	POS Executive Committee meets (via teleconference) to discuss 10 year incremental plan and to determine further strategy.
<b>March 6, 2008</b>	Jonathan Bigley meets with Rosemarie Greco to discuss POS concerns with 10 year incremental plan.
<b>March 10, 2008</b>	POS Executive Committee meets (via teleconference) to finalize strategy for the coming House action during the remainder of the week.
<b>March 11, 2008</b>	POS President Jon Tucker meets with House Majority Leader Bill DeWeese.
<b>March 12, 2008</b>	POS President Jon Tucker meets with various legislators, HAP representatives, and PMS's Roger Mecum (via telephone). Final strategy vetted with Executive Committee (via email). POS issues email to House members requesting they vote in favor of Eachus Amendment to SB 1137 and expressing POS's concerns that more work needs to be done on the bill. House approves Eachus Amendment on a bipartisan 114 – 81 vote.
<b>March 14, 2008</b>	Dr. Tucker issues a Mcare Update letter to POS membership
<b>March 17, 2008</b>	House passed SB 1137, which includes a 10-year plan for Mcare Abatement, along with a plan to retire the Mcare Fund, and a program for providing uninsured adults with affordable health insurance, sending the legislation to the Senate, which is expected to hold hearings on the bill. POS continues to work with Gov. Rendell and his staff to request another Mcare deferral, recognizing that the legislation may not be acted on before June Deputy Insurance Commissioner for Mcare confirms that if an extension of the abatement program in 2008 is authorized, Mcare will make refunds directly to providers when Mcare is in receipt of the full, unabated assessment and the provider has been granted 2008 abatement.
<b>March 28, 2008</b>	<b>Governor issues letters to physicians notifying them that their Mcare Assessment is due March 31</b> (if their medical liability insurance premium was due Jan. 1). Physicians will be refunded their assessment payment if and when Mcare Abatement is re-enacted.
<b>April 23, 2008</b>	The Pennsylvania General Assembly returns to Harrisburg on 4/28 after the Primary Election recess. POS President Jon B. Tucker, MD issues letter to members of the Pennsylvania Senate urging them to pass SB 1137 <b>with an amendment</b> that would: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Guarantee state revenues are committed to provide abatement as well as annual Mcare Fund obligations (claims and operating expenses)</li> </ol>

	<p>before other programs receive funding;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Provide that adequate funds are reserved to retire the Mcare Fund completely; and,</li> <li>3. Require healthcare insurance contractors compensate physicians at reimbursement rates that are fair and reasonable, pay physicians promptly and ensure physicians receive any required co-payments from PA ABC participants.</li> </ol>
<b>May 16, 2008</b>	POS urges membership to communicate our message to senators. Targets 14 key legislative districts with letters to the editors, op-eds, and letters to specific senators from pos members.
<b>June 2, 2008</b>	This week, the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee heard from representatives of the Rendell Administration, Pennsylvania Medical Society and The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania on the Mcare provisions of SB 1137. Both Republican and Democrat senators expressed support for the abatement and Mcare Fund retirement provisions of the bill, but Republican senators expressed the desire to de-link Mcare from the PA-ABC healthcare insurance initiative. A hearing on the PA-ABC provisions of the bill is scheduled for next week.
<b>June 16, 2008</b>	<p>This month's <i>Physicians News</i> features an interview with POS President Jon Tucker, MD on the legislative stalemate over Mcare Abatement and expanded health insurance for the uninsured.</p> <p>The Society's leadership urges members to contact General Assembly members and request passage of the Mcare abatement/retirement plan contained in SB 1137. This plan entails a continuation of the abatement program for 10 years, a phase-out of the Mcare Fund over 10 years, and the retirement of the Fund's tail with state resources. POS also provides members with sample letters to the editor and talking points.</p> <p>Dr. Tucker submits letter to the editor to Pittsburgh Post Gazette and Harrisburg Patriot news.</p>
<b>July 3, 2008</b>	<p><b>General Assembly Breaks for Summer with Mcare and Healthcare Issues Unresolved</b> Throughout the summer session, POS members and leadership vigorously advocated for a plan that would continue Mcare abatement for 10 years, phase out the Mcare Program over 10 years, and retire the Mcare Fund with state revenues. Unfortunately, the General Assembly broke for their summer recess without resolving these and other healthcare related issues.</p>
<b>August 26, 2008</b>	<p>Executive Committees meets and decides to continue to advocate for multi-year abatement. Our plan for the fall will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued advocacy for multi-year abatement while also advocating for retirement of the Mcare fund, and healthcare coverage for the uninsured</li> <li>• Meet with various stakeholders to discuss a potential unified strategy</li> <li>• Send letters/emails/video to the General Assembly</li> <li>• Submit letters to the editor and op-eds to statewide media outlets</li> </ul>