

What is CAL-PT-PAC?

Pam Woudstra, PAC Consultant

The CAL-PT-PAC is the *only* political action committee in California representing the profession of Physical Therapy. The mission of the PAC is to elect candidates to the state legislature who are sympathetic to the views held by our Association. The PAC also attempts to educate and encourage active participation by all of our members in the political process.

Listed below are some commonly asked questions about CAL-PT-PAC. If you don't find the answer to your question, please don't hesitate to contact Tameka Island, Executive Associate, Professional Affairs, (916) 929-2782.

Q. I support my own legislator. Isn't that enough?

A. Congratulations! If you contribute to your own legislator, you are one of the few "players" in politics in California. We encourage you to continue your individual participation, but ask for additional involvement. Your contribution to the CAL-PT-PAC, added with those of hundreds of your colleagues, gives us strength. Campaigns are expensive and by pooling our resources in the PAC, we have a greater impact.

Q. Does the PAC only give to candidates of one political party?

A. No, the CAL-PT-PAC is bi-partisan. Our giving is not based on party labels. We contribute to candidates we believe support our view on the profession of physical therapy – nothing more. We don't care about a candidate's stand on transportation or water issues, etc. Our focus is strictly physical therapy. Although you may be a strong party member, most physical therapy issues are non-partisan and we have friends on both sides of the aisle.

Q. How does the PAC decide who to contribute to?

A. Many factors come into play. The committee assesses the previous track record of the incumbents such as accessibility to our leadership and our advocates, whether they carried legislation on our behalf, if they spoke in support of our bills in Committee or on the floor. For incumbents, we also take into account committee assignments and leadership positions held. If no incumbent is running, we talk to candidates in an attempt to see what he or she knows about the practice of physical

therapy and if they are sympathetic to our views. This also provides us the opportunity to educate potential new legislators about who we are and what we do. In addition, we encourage the input of local physical therapists and rely on political intelligence to assist us in determining if the candidate is “electable.” After all, losing candidates do not legislate.

Q. I don't really like politics and I don't think what happens in Sacramento really affects me.

A. Whether you realize it or not, nearly everything you do in your practice is decided by the men and women in Sacramento. They determine how you will be licensed and regulated, whether or not workers compensation will reimburse for your services, who can own a PT practice and where, the working hours of your support staff, etc. Politics, like nature, abhors a vacuum. If we don't step up to the plate and become engaged in the process, then the chiropractors and others will gladly step in.

Q. I can't afford it.

A. Contributions to the PAC range from \$10 to over a \$1,000. Every contribution is important. You can make donating to the PAC fun by buying a raffle ticket at your District meeting for both the District level raffle as well as our statewide raffle. Non-monetary support for the PAC is also welcome (please see the PAC web page for more information).