



“Making An Impact – the 2017 APhA House of Delegates”

Mr. Secretary, Mr. Speaker-Elect, Delegates and Colleagues,

As my tenure as your Speaker comes to a close, I have had a chance to reflect on this wonderful opportunity to shepherd the policy process for our Association and help this House reach pertinent policy that will guide us into the future. As we open this 106th Annual Meeting of APhA, our focus is “Making an Impact on Patient Care.” One of my primary reasons for wanting to serve as Speaker is the important role that this House has in guiding the direction of the Association. One of the nicknames for San Francisco is the “City by the Bay,” so this location is perfect to draw the analogy of the House of Delegates being a rudder that steers the ship or charts the course for the future of our profession. Our theme in Baltimore was expanding opportunities, and now, more than ever, it appears that our profession is at a tipping point. Will 2017 be the year that Congress finally passes Provider Status? If not by Congress, there is much happening at the State level to increase pharmacists’ authority to practice in more collaborative ways, and even with increased coordinated independent authority. This House will be considering very forward-thinking policies this year that will indeed lead us into the future. An often-heard quote states, “the best way to predict the future is to create it.” Through our 2017 policy topics, Pharmacist Prescribing, Value based Payment Models, and Pharmacy Performance Networks, and our New Business items, this House could indeed be creating and guiding our future.

Last year I spoke of the legacy of leadership that our House of Delegates brings to APhA. This year’s policy topics continue to showcase how our House leads the Association. Since the release of our proposed policy statements, we have seen the release of CMS bulletins on Expanded Scope of Pharmacists’ Practice and Impact of DIR fees, which have both had a favorable view of pharmacists and pharmacy practice. Our House strives to look out beyond the horizon, take risks, and make sure that we remain contemporary and focused on our north star: “Patients having access to and coverage for our quality patient care services” – note the focus on patients. Several years ago, our House leaders had a vision for improving the delegate process and increasing the interaction throughout the year. In 2014, we started the year-round delegate process, and I am happy to report the outcome of this and other changes. Our delegates are signing up earlier in our APhA year, with many delegations even filling up. Also, this year was the first that we are implementing the process of removing delegate seats for delegations who have not filled their entire delegation seating and/or not been present over the past 3 years. Our goal was to increase delegate engagement, and I am happy to report that very few seats were eliminated! We have seen a 30% increase in our webinar participation for the 2016-17 delegate year versus the same time frame the year before. And, delegate involvement in the ENGAGE platform has also increased, and even been rather lively in the weeks leading up to this meeting. Our House Rules Review will propose that we continue the change to the Policy Review Committee process, to move Part 2 of the report to the Policy Review Committee the following year. In addition, we will maintain our “no secondary amendments” policy again this year, with

the goal of both changes being to improve the efficiency and transparency of the House of Delegates. I am pleased with the outcomes and positive changes that we have seen during my tenure as Speaker, and I look forward to seeing how our Association can continue to utilize technology to improve the delegate experience.

Making an Impact takes patience, persistence, and perseverance. In his book, "Water the Bamboo," Greg Bell provides examples of these traits as he describes the life of a bamboo farmer. As a profession, we, too, need to believe in what we can accomplish, but we also need to be prepared to change our course if something doesn't work, and be persistent until we are successful. Our President, Kelly Goode, challenged us to embrace the power of community and to recognize the value community based pharmacy practitioners provide to team-based care. It is our responsibility to embrace new opportunities, optimize recognition, utilize our expertise, and influence our colleagues to do the same. Through efforts such as these, we will impact our profession and our patients. As a famous Floridian, Walt Disney, has said, "All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them."

As I close, I would like to take a point of personal privilege to thank my wonderful husband and family for all of their love and support as I served in this office. I am especially grateful to my husband for "holding down the fort," both with our family and our business, in my absence. In addition, my "pharmily," my Bay Street Pharmacy staff (note, even WE meet the theme of the city by the "bay"). They have had to work extra hard to allow me to be away on many occasions, so I am equally grateful to all of them.

Thank you to Mitch, Brian, Wendy and the various rotation students who have been invaluable to me in my tenure as speaker, and who are the crew behind the scenes that make this House sail smoothly! I promise you that this House is a team effort and we are blessed to have them. And, you are being left in the most competent hands with your new Speaker, Michael Hogue. With his varied experiences as a pharmacist, in addition to all of the roles he has held in leadership, in APhA, and in our profession, Michael is a tremendous leader who will keep taking our House of Delegates to the next level.

I bid you all "Peace, Love & Pharmacy," and God's blessings for what you do for our patients and our profession. Thank you again for this amazing opportunity to serve as your Speaker! It is an experience I will treasure always.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theresa W. Tolle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Theresa Tolle
Speaker of the APhA House of Delegates