

## **BOG Chair-Elect Candidate Statement**

**Dole P. Baker, Jr., MD**

**What is the greatest challenge our specialty is currently facing and how would you advocate for action through member engagement?**

**What specific initiatives would you recommend to strengthen the relationship and engagement opportunities between the AAO-HNS/F and state, local, and specialty societies?**

The greatest challenges currently facing our specialty and the patients who seek our care are socioeconomic. Otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeons have mastered the art and science of education and training. We are blessed with solid clinical practitioners throughout our specialty and excellent training programs, including those offered through the Academy. Where our specialty has not kept pace, however, is in the socioeconomic realm; fostering the ability to maintain a strong and healthy practice from both a financial and physician well-being perspective (i.e., independence, autonomy, work-life balance, etc.).

Much as a strong middleclass ensures a vibrant and healthy society, strong private practices ensure access and quality care for patients throughout the United States and Canada in a variety of geographic settings. These practitioners identify and diagnose those patients requiring referral for tertiary care at our academic centers, where many of our Academy members and Board of Governors (BOG) representatives practice and work. Vibrant and socioeconomically healthy private practices, from both physician financial and satisfaction perspectives, compel large medical centers and private equity groups to appropriately compensate their employed otolaryngologists—both monetarily and through work-life balance—as they are forced to match the private practice benefits and rewards. Therefore, the continued existence within our specialty of a significant collection of robust, financially sound private practices—those practices owned and managed by otolaryngologists; both small groups and large regional groups—is vital to ensure the socioeconomic success of all otolaryngologists and the delivery of care to our patients.

If elected Chair of the BOG, I would work to first establish and strengthen the relationship of the BOG and its constituent societies with the members of the recently formed Private Practice Study Group (PPSG). Joint programming and engagement of our shared members would lead to the continued strengthening of both the BOG and the PPSG. I would also promote improved personal communication and outreach within the BOG and the Academy by having a BOG representative provide a brief update and be available to our members for any questions or to receive feedback at each local or state ENT meeting, or any of the sister society meetings.

The BOG is uniquely positioned to help affect the needed changes and support our specialties' prosperity by addressing governmental and insurance issues along with local, regional, and national policies that are hindering us. By bridging together the various constituencies within the BOG, we will be more effective in facing and influencing these

changes. More than 20 years of working in private practice, in a variety of settings, has provided me with the leadership and skills to pivot, adjust, and implement new services and processes in response to changing policies. These qualities coupled with my lengthy involvement in the BOG and Academy, along with leadership roles in the American Academy of Otolaryngic Allergy, have given me the tools to help guide our specialty as BOG Chair to a more solid and prosperous economic future.