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Chairperson's Corner

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I'm honored to serve as chairperson for the Long Term Care Insurance Section for the second time. My first term was in 2005 to 2006. Much has changed in the industry since then. In reviewing one of my Chairperson's Corners from ten years ago that challenged us to introduce new types of products, I see that we are still an industry that is craving innovation and solutions that are more appealing to a new generation of buyers.

In 2005, the decline in new sales had just begun. At the time, I don't think that any of us recognized that it would continue for the next decade. Yet, here we are, and we continue to see that long-term care insurance has not reached the level of penetration that we all hoped it would in its heyday.

I'm an optimist. I truly believe that private financing of long-term care can assume the much bigger role that it should. There is clearly little appetite to expand public programs, and state governments are eager to find solutions that will relieve their ever expanding Medicaid budgets. There is increasing receptivity to change laws and regulations to allow for the creation of products that are more appealing to consumers and far less risky to insurers. We, as an industry, need to stretch our creativity and respond.

The section hosted the third in-person Think Tank meeting in October and has recently published a report that summarizes its outcomes and suggestions for next steps. The report is available on our section's home page (soa.org/ltc/). I encourage you all to take a look. Rather than suggest a single "silver bullet," the report lays out the germinations of concepts that can be drawn from or fitted together with other concepts to create sets of solutions. The solutions address not only financing, but also the affordability and availability of quality of care, as we view these three issues as inseparable. The report points to growing social capital and emerging technology, as well as new ways to look at pre-funding our long-term care needs. We are currently forming sub-committees for each of three "platforms" of ideas to help take them to their next steps.

The section will also look to continue the momentum that started last year to reach out to our regulatory members. We expect to host more educational sessions that are aimed at regulators via webcast and to give presentations at hearings related to long-term care in state capitals. These efforts have been well received



and we are happy to keep this important initiative going in the next year.

Please feel free to reach out to me or Joe Wurzbarger, the section's staff fellow, if you would like to participate in the next steps of the Think Tank's platforms, the regulatory outreach, or if you have any suggestions for section activities. ■



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