



From the President

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CAALA's partnership with CAOC

ESSENTIAL TO PROTECTING JUSTICE IN CALIFORNIA

As plaintiffs' attorneys, we know that the courtroom is only one of the places where justice is won. Increasingly, the most consequential battles for our clients' rights are fought in the State Capitol, often long before a case is ever filed. That is why the work of Consumer Attorneys of California (CAOC) is indispensable to the future of our practices, our clients, and the civil justice system itself. It is why CAALA's partnership with CAOC is not simply beneficial, it is essential.

CAOC is the statewide voice for consumers and the plaintiff bar. Every year, CAOC stands guard in Sacramento, monitoring hundreds of bills, advancing pro-consumer reforms, and stopping legislation designed to restrict access to justice. Their work ensures that the rights we rely on in the courtroom are not quietly eroded in committee hearings or budget negotiations. For decades, CAOC has been the counterweight to the well-funded interests that seek to limit accountability, weaken civil protections, and shield corporate wrongdoers from responsibility.

As the largest local plaintiff bar in the nation, CAALA has a responsibility to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with CAOC. Our members' voices, expertise, and lived experience as trial lawyers strengthen CAOC's advocacy and amplify its impact. When CAALA and CAOC work in alignment, we create a unified front that lawmakers cannot ignore.

Why this partnership matters now more than ever

The political landscape in California is shifting. Each legislative session brings new attempts to limit damages, restrict access to justice, narrow standing, or create procedural hurdles that disproportionately harm injured consumers. These efforts often move quickly and quietly. Without CAOC's constant vigilance, many harmful proposals would pass unnoticed until they reached our courtrooms.

Legislators listen when they hear from lawyers who live and work in their districts. They listen when CAALA members show up, testify, write letters, and explain how proposed laws will affect real people. Our partnership with CAOC ensures that the voices of Southern California trial lawyers, who represent some of the most vulnerable communities in the state, are heard clearly in Sacramento.

CAOC has successfully sponsored bills

In 2025 alone, CAOC sponsored seven bills and five of them were signed by Governor Gavin Newsom including:

SB 37 (Umberg): Prohibits lawyers from including deceptive information in their advertisements, including billboards and online displays, about their experiences or trial records and from touting awards that they paid to receive.

AB 931 (Kalra): Protects Californians in two crucial ways: (1) it creates a regulatory framework for consumer protection in the non-recourse legal advances space, and (2) prohibits non-lawyers from sharing legal fees with lawyers, preserving attorney independence from corporate and investor influence.

AB 251 (Kalra): Gives judges discretion to lower the burden of proof in elder abuse cases involving spoliation.

CAOC has successfully opposed bills or negotiated bills

Some of the recent bills CAOC has successfully opposed or negotiated include:

Caps on non-economic damages: We saw a serious attack to undermine the legal rights of those injured or killed by a public entity. Los Angeles City Attorney Hydee Feldstein Soto had a proposal to cap noneconomic damages to three times actual damages or \$1 million, whichever was less. CAOC organized more than 35 groups to oppose the proposal, and it did not succeed.

Restrictions on the legal rights of adult survivors of childhood sexual assault: Survivors recently faced direct attacks on their legal rights by public entities and schools. CAOC advocates spent many months attempting to address the important goal of protecting the legal rights of sexual assault survivors while also considering some legitimate concerns raised by public entities following the enactment of the "look-back" statute, which extended the statute of limitations for these cases. CAOC defeated proposals to drastically change or even eliminate the rights of survivors (SB 832-Alen and a Los Angeles County proposal to eliminate claims) and remain committed to supporting policies that prevent abuse and protect the rights of individuals who have experienced abuse in school settings.

Uber's initiative

CAOC has been instrumental in leading the statewide fight against Uber's initiative, which threatens to strip away long-standing consumer protections, limit accountability for corporate misconduct, and undermine the rights of injured Californians. With its deep legislative expertise, policy analysis, and coalition-building capacity, CAOC's seasoned political team organized a strategic response. CAOC has been exceptional in leading the fight against Uber's initiative. CAOC's legislative attorney advocates and its leadership have ensured that lawmakers, the media, and voters understand how the measure would shield rideshare companies from responsibility. Working closely with a broad coalition of consumer, labor, and public-safety organizations, CAOC has been essential in coordinating strategy, developing countermeasures, and mobilizing the legal community to defend the rights of California families.

The path forward: CAALA + CAOC = A stronger voice for justice

These victories did not happen by accident. They happened because CAOC was in the room – analyzing bills, negotiating language, building coalitions, and mobilizing attorneys across the state. They happened because organizations like CAALA stood with CAOC, lending our strength, and our collective voice.

For decades, CAOC has sponsored and helped pass some of the most important consumer-protection laws in California. CAOC has also opposed or negotiated key bills that would have affected our practice and consumers' access to justice. These victories have strengthened our ability to advocate for clients and have expanded the rights of injured people across the state.

As CAALA President, I believe deeply that our partnership with CAOC is one of the most important investments we can make in the future of our profession. When we support CAOC, we are supporting:

- The rights of our clients
- The integrity of our practices
- The strength of our civil justice system
- The future of consumer protection in California

Our unity is our power.