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State medical association honors two legislators for support of health care issues

INDIANAPOLIS - Two central Indiana legislators were presented the Legislator of the Year Award by the Indiana State Medical Association (ISMA) for their support of health care issues. The state's largest physician organization presents the annual award to a legislator, or legislators, who helps the ISMA advocate for patients during the past legislative year.

Sen. Patricia Miller, (R-Indianapolis), and Rep. Tim Brown, M.D., (R-Crawfordsville) accepted the award Sept. 17 during the ISMA convention in Indianapolis.

"Both legislators have a proven track record of advocating for patients," noted Mike Rinebold, director of the ISMA's Government Relations Department. "It was a pleasure to work closely with both legislators, and I look forward to continuing to build upon the work they accomplished last session."

Among their legislative achievements, Sen. Miller and Rep. Brown were successful in passing a new law that bans synthetic cannabinoids and salvia, commonly referred to as Spice or K2. Usually sold in convenience stores, use of the chemicals can cause hallucinations, abnormal heart rates and even death.

A registered nurse, Sen. Miller was first elected to the Indiana House of Representatives in 1982 and the Indiana Senate in 1983. She chairs the Senate Health and Provider Services Committee, which addresses health, health insurance, social services and Medicaid issues. She also serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee and the Senate Elections Committee.

First elected in 1994, Rep. Brown, a family medicine physician, is chair of the Public Health Committee. He also serves on the Education Committee and the Family, Children and Human Affairs Committee.

Established in 1849, the ISMA has approximately 8,000 physician members from every county in the state. The organization works to promote sound health care policy in the public, private and governmental sectors and to support continuing medical education for the state's doctors.

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Editor's Note: For more details about the ISMA convention and photos of Sen. Miller and Rep. Brown, go to www.ismanet.org/convention/go/2011convention.