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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 20, 2012
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OPEIU Guild 45 Congratulates Governor Cuomo on Signing A9293A to Expand Podiatric Scope of Practice, Thus Improving Quality of Patient Care for New Yorkers

(New York, NY) August 20, 2012 – OPEIU Guild 45/The First National Guild for Healthcare Providers of the Lower Extremity and the New York State Podiatric Medical Association congratulate Governor Cuomo for signing A9293A, a measure that will expand the scope of practice to include essential ankle and foot care services by podiatrists.

The measure, which amends Section 7001 of the Education Law, is a progressive public policy victory that will improve the health and quality of life for thousands of New Yorkers, particularly those living with diabetes mellitus. Early detection and treatment of diabetic-related lower extremity conditions will also help to contain Medicaid costs going forward.

Until now, New York was one of six states that significantly limit the practice of podiatry. Advancements in the study and medical training around podiatry, however, called for New York's definition of the practice to be expanded. Conventional medicine recognizes that many conditions of the foot originate in the soft tissue above the ankle bone. This is reflected in the training that is currently provided in the New York State College of Podiatric Medicine and in New York podiatric residency programs. With scope of practice expansion, the practice of podiatry is now consistent with the skills of the practitioners.

NYSPMA President, Gary Stones, DPM and Executive Director Len Thaler congratulated Governor Cuomo for his leadership in this area and said, "We are pleased that New York will now join 44 states in refining the definition of podiatry in order to reflect the medical education relating to the treatment of malfunctions in the foot. This refinement will improve patients' access to a fuller array of healthcare services and practitioners while assuring a greater quality of care."

ABOUT OPEIU GUILD 45

OPEIU Guild 45 represents 1,200 podiatrists, members of the New York State Podiatric Medical Association (NYSPMA), organizations that advocate for practitioners of podiatry and for the communities they serve. Members adhere to a code of strict ethical standards and participate in numerous programs to benefit patients, the podiatric profession and the general public.

Both Guild 45 and the NYSPMA work with the New York State Legislature on issues to correct injustices to podiatrists, such as full participation in the Medicaid program and scope of practice issues.

Guild 45 is affiliated with Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU).