

# THE ENT Advocate



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
OTOLARYNGOLOGY—  
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY



Dear ENT Advocacy Network Member:

January 12, 2018

Legislative and political activity directly affects our practices and our patients. As a leading advocate for otolaryngology-head and neck surgery, we hope you enjoy reading this edition of The ENT Advocate, your premier source of advocacy information for the specialty!

## Lead Story

### ENT PAC Kicks Off Annual “First 50” Campaign



Start the new year off right: become a 2018 “First 50” ENT PAC Investor! The second annual “First 50” campaign is underway, and AAO-HNS members have until January 31 to participate in this fundraising effort to garner **50 \$1,000+** (Chairman’s Club) PAC Investors during the month of January. As we prepare for another year of health-related reforms AND the 2018 mid-term elections, participating in the “First 50” campaign will help ensure our specialty’s ability to actively engage in the issues critical to our practices and our patients. **“First 50” contributors will have exclusive access to a 2018 conference call series with high-ranking individuals from Congress and the Administration.**

On January 10, U.S. Representative Ami Bera, MD (D-CA) joined “First 50” Investors for the first call of the 2018 series. Help us fill in the “First 50” logo by making your 2018 \$1,000+ contribution to [ENT PAC](#) today.\* If you have questions or would like additional information, contact ENT PAC staff at [entpac@entnet.org](mailto:entpac@entnet.org).

## Action Requested

### Where the Action Is...The 2018 Legislative Sessions Are Now Open!

So it begins. The majority of state assemblies open their doors in January. The notable exceptions this year are Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, and Texas which hold sessions only every other year. However, this only puts a small dent in the number of bills that are expected across the remaining states. Estimates for this year are 92,900 bills will be introduced, while at least 75,475 will be considered as part of carry-over legislation from last year for a combined total of 168,375 bills! With the help of our physician volunteer [State Trackers](#), the AAO-HNS will track bills on issues like scope of practice, hearing aid dispensing and coverage, in-office compounding, MOC, and other topics of concern to the specialty. We are always looking for AAO-HNS members who wish to actively protect their profession, patients, and practices from legislative surprises and promote the specialty with state legislators. Interested in volunteering? It’s not too late. Please contact [legstate@entnet.org](mailto:legstate@entnet.org) for more information!

## Legislative & Political Reports

### Second Session of 115th Congress Convened January 2

The second session of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress convened on January 2, and federal lawmakers are already facing a complicated list of priorities. Short-term agenda items include: passing legislation to fund the government before the current Continuing Resolution (CR) expires on January 19; reauthorizing the Children’s Health Insurance Plan; and securing a final agreement related to Medicare “Extenders.”

### U.S. Senate Continues Confirmation Process for Secretary of HHS

The process of confirming Alex Azar to serve as the next Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) continued January 9 via a preliminary hearing by the [Senate Finance Committee](#). Prior to his nomination, Azar led the U.S. Pharmaceutical Division for Eli Lilly and served as a Deputy Secretary at HHS during the George W. Bush Administration. Azar previously testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Health,

Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) in November 2017, and the Senate Finance Committee is expected to soon announce the date of Azar's final confirmation hearing.

## Other News

### Register Now for the AAO-HNS/F 2018 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting

Make plans to attend the [AAO-HNS/F 2018 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting](#), March 9-12, in Alexandria, VA. Join your colleagues for leadership development and mentoring opportunities, networking events with Academy leaders (including the fun-filled ENT PAC reception), BOG committee meetings, state society engagement discussions and tips, advocacy updates, and much more. Registration is complimentary to AAO-HNS members who are otolaryngology practitioners; however, you must register by March 2 to attend.

### AAO-HNS Publishes 2018 Quality Payment Program Fact Sheet

To assist members with participation in Year 2 of the Quality Payment Program (QPP), the Academy developed a [fact sheet](#) to highlight the program's changes, as established in the CY 2018 QPP final rule. The fact sheet highlights changes to MIPS, performance categories, participation requirements, and APMs, among other provisions.

### Update: Anthem Reconsiders Modifier 25 Reimbursement

Due to collaborative efforts by the medical community, including the AAO-HNS and our members, Anthem has reconsidered how much it will lower the [Modifier 25 E/M service](#) when reported by the same provider in the same day as a minor surgery. Effective March 1, Anthem will be decreasing the service value by 25 percent instead of the previously announced 50 percent. The AAO-HNS will continue to work to eliminate the reduction altogether.



Sincerely,  
Susan R. Cordes, MD  
BOG Legislative Affairs Committee Chair  
and the AAO-HNS Legislative Advocacy Team

For more information, contact [govtaffairs@entnet.org](mailto:govtaffairs@entnet.org). Don't forget to bookmark *The ENT Advocate*!

If you no longer wish to receive important legislative and political updates via *The ENT Advocate*, please reply to this email with CANCEL ADVOCATE in the subject line.

\*Contributions to ENT PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Contributions are voluntary, and all members of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Federal law prohibits ENT PAC from accepting contributions from foreign nationals. By law, if your contributions are made using a personal check or credit card, ENT PAC may use your contribution only to support candidates in federal elections. All corporate contributions to ENT PAC will be used for educational and administrative fees of ENT PAC, and other activities permissible under federal law. Federal law requires ENT PAC to use its best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation, and the name of the employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

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