



Dear ENT Advocacy Network Member:

June 2, 2017

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

### **AAO-HNS Works to Secure Patient Safety Provisions in OTC Hearing Aid Legislation**

On May 18, [the House Energy & Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health "marked-up"](#) the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) User Fee reauthorization bill. During the mark-up, the bill was amended to include language instructing the FDA to create a new class of over-the-counter hearing aids for adults with mild-to-moderate hearing loss. The bill will likely be considered by the full Committee the week of June 5, and the AAO-HNS is working with Committee staff to secure additional amendments pertaining to patient safety.

## Action Request

### **Sign-on Request: Oppose Audiology Physician Status Legislation**

The AAO-HNS is currently collecting signatories for a sign-on letter in opposition to H.R. 2276. If enacted, this federal legislation would provide audiologists with "direct access" to Medicare patients without a physician referral, as well as amend Title XVIII of the Social Security Act to include audiologists in the definition of "physician." Past AAO-HNS letters on this topic have generated more than 120 signatories, and we hope to secure the same level of support this year. [CLICK HERE](#) to review the letter and current list of signatories. Email [legfederal@entnet.org](mailto:legfederal@entnet.org) to add your state's otolaryngology society and/or group practice name to the letter.

### **PROJECT 535 In Action**

In the first half of 2017, PROJECT 535 participants made their voices heard opposing H.R. 2276, an audiology scope of practice bill, and encouraged their U.S. Representatives to support legislation that would repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB). PROJECT 535 volunteers have also weighed in on global surgical codes and urged support for legislation to reauthorize the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Act. PROJECT 535 continues to make an impact, but with only 60 percent coverage of all 535 U.S. House and Senate districts, it is imperative that the Academy grow its team of grassroots advocates. [CLICK HERE](#) to see if your Congressional District is covered. If not, [sign up today](#) to be a PROJECT 535 key contact and help reinforce our message. For more information, contact [legfederal@entnet.org](mailto:legfederal@entnet.org).

### **AAO-HNS Action Alerts: A Few Clicks and You're Done!**

Strengthen and reinforce efforts made by PROJECT 535 volunteers and other Academy members by making your voice heard on issues affecting the specialty! The AAO-HNS Legislative Action Center has several "action alerts," and we need your help to spread our message. [CLICK HERE](#) to view the alerts and easily send a customizable email to your U.S. Representative or Senators.

### **10,000 ENTs | 1 PAC | 1 VOICE**

Thanks to the generous contributions from our members, the AAO-HNS (via ENT PAC) has recently co-hosted and participated in political events with the broader physician community in support of the following federal lawmakers: U.S. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, House Republican Conference Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers, and Mike Burgess, MD, Chair of the House Energy & Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health. The Academy's presence at these events is crucial to ensuring the specialty's voice is heard on Capitol Hill, especially given the continued focus on healthcare. Help strengthen our ongoing political

advocacy efforts by [making your 2017 ENT PAC investment today!](#)\* If you have questions or would like additional information, visit the re-designed [ENT PAC website](#) (log-in with your AAO-HNS member ID and password).

## Legislative & Political Reports

### CBO "Scores" the AHCA

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) recently [released its analysis](#) of the American Health Care Act (AHCA). If enacted, the CBO estimates the AHCA would lower the deficit by \$119 billion over 10 years, while 23 million more people would be uninsured by the year 2026. Additionally, the CBO estimates that insurance premiums will increase in the years before 2020, as compared to current law. After the year 2020, the price of premiums will depend on several factors, including waivers granted to states and changes to markets. The U.S. Senate is expected to substantially amend, if not re-write, the House-passed version of the AHCA. As this process moves forward, the AAO-HNS is continuing to engage with lawmakers, advocating for affordable access to care for patients and reduced administrative burdens on physicians.

### Congressional Committee Examines Status of Medicare

On May 18, Legislative Advocacy staff attended a House Ways & Means Health Subcommittee hearing examining the "Current Status of the Medicare Program, Payment Systems, and Extenders." Mark Miller, PhD, Executive Director of the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC), served as the sole witness, [providing testimony](#) to the Committee regarding MedPAC's March 2017 Report to Congress.

### Coalition Supports Expansion of Physician-Owned Hospitals

The AAO-HNS joined 55 stakeholders, including national, state, and local physician groups and organizations, in [sending a letter](#) to members of the U.S. House of Representatives in support of the "Patient Access to Higher Quality Health Care Act of 2017" (H.R. 1156). If enacted, H.R. 1156 would repeal the current moratorium on expansion and construction of physician-owned hospitals.

### Read the Latest Edition of The State-mENT!

[The State-mENT](#) is an "at a glance" one-page resource outlining the Academy's state legislative activity from the previous month. Sign up as a [State Tracker](#) and become part of the discussion!

## Other News



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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