



Dear ENT Advocacy Network Member:

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

The 115th Congress Convenes with an Ambitious Agenda

The 115th Congress convened on Tuesday, January 3, with lawmakers facing a list of complicated priorities. Most notable is Congress' goal to deliver legislation repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to President-elect Trump's desk within his first 100 days in office. In addition to monitoring ACA-related activities, the Academy will focus its federal legislative advocacy efforts on securing re-introduction of AAO-HNS-supported bills (newborn hearing screening/EHDI and federal Truth in Advertising) and monitoring legislative efforts related to the potential sale of over-the-counter or "basic" hearing aids for individuals with mild to moderate hearing loss.

Action Requested

Strengthening PROJECT 535

Given the ambitious agenda of the 115th Congress, it's more important than ever for the AAO-HNS to strengthen its "key contacts" network via PROJECT 535. In addition to the Academy's overall advocacy efforts, PROJECT 535 volunteers help reinforce our message by establishing one-to-one relationships with federal elected officials. This additional layer of constituent-based outreach helps to amplify our position when Congress debates major issues. The commitment is minimal, but the impact is immense! To help further strengthen our collective advocacy efforts, [sign up](#) today or contact legfederal@entnet.org for more information.

Start the New Year Off Right: Become a "First 50" PAC Investor Today!*



This week, the ENT PAC Board of Advisors launched the inaugural "First 50" campaign, a fundraising effort to garner 50 \$1,000+ (Chairman's Club) PAC Investors during the month of January. Help us fill in the "First 50" logo by making your [contribution](#) today. "First 50" contributors will have exclusive access to a 2017 conference call series with high-ranking individuals from Congress and the Administration. [CLICK HERE](#) to make your 2017 \$1,000+ ENT PAC investment. If you have questions or would like additional information, contact ENT PAC staff at entpac@entnet.org.

The 2017 State Legislative Session Is Here!

With the start of the new year, so begins the 2017 state legislative session. Most state legislatures will reconvene in January, and issues like scope of practice, regulation of e-cigarettes and other "vaping" products, taxes on medical procedures, and the regulation of in-office compounding are once again on the table. The [AAO-HNS State Trackers](#) are already at work to ensure their respective state is protected from any legislative surprises that could negatively impact the specialty and our patients. Interested in volunteering? It's not too late. Please contact legstate@entnet.org for more information!

AAO-HNS Informational Updates

AAO-HNS Comments to CMS on MIPS and APM Final Rule

On December 19, 2016, the Academy submitted comments to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)

in response to the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) and Alternative Payment Model (APM) Final Rule. The Academy commented on the reduced reporting requirements for the transition year; MIPS performance category criteria and scoring; Qualified Clinical Data Registry (QCDR) and quality measure reporting requirements; and applicability of APMs to otolaryngologists. [Access the comments.](#)

Registration Open- AAO-HNS/F 2017 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting

Join leaders of the specialty at the AAO-HNS/F 2017 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting, Friday, March 10 – Monday, March 13, in Alexandria, VA. [Registration is open](#) and complimentary to AAO-HNS members who are otolaryngology practitioners!



AAO-HNS/F 2017 LEADERSHIP FORUM & BOG SPRING MEETING

MARCH
10-13
ALEXANDRIA, VA

Other News

FDA Announces New Guidance on Hearing Aid Medical Evaluations and Waivers

On December 7, 2016, the AAO-HNS participated in a hearing healthcare stakeholder meeting hosted by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), formerly the IOM. The session served as a follow-up to the June 2016 NAM report on hearing healthcare services. At the meeting, the Food & Drug Administration (FDA) [announced](#) it will implement the third recommendation of the NAM report and will no longer enforce the requirement that individuals, age 18 years and older, receive a medical evaluation or sign a waiver prior to purchasing most hearing aids. Although the guidance is effective immediately, the FDA will accept public comments. The AAO-HNS provided [comments to the FDA](#) on this topic in June 2016 and is reviewing the effect of the new guidance on current practices, as well as its potential impact on "direct access" legislation and Medicare's physician referral requirements.

Sincerely,

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

For more information, contact 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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