

STATE-MENT

MONTHLY STATE TRACKER UPDATE

MAY/JUNE 2018



Representing CENTS and the AAO-HNS, Samuel Gubbels, MD, attends Governor Hickenlooper's signing ceremony after the successful passage of the Infant Newborn Screening bill in Colorado.

Issues of Interest

- **Colorado:** The Colorado Ear, Nose and Throat Society (CENTS), in conjunction with the AAO-HNS, worked to support the passage of HB 1006, an update to the state's Infant Newborn Screening program. The bill creates a funding source for newborn hearing loss screenings and follow-up services, as well as expands screenings for specific diseases. In addition to signing a coalition fact sheet, CENTS and AAO-HNS wrote a [letter of support](#) to the Governor.
- **Connecticut:** SB 402, the Truth in Advertising bill supported by a number of medical specialty societies including the Connecticut Ear, Nose and Throat Society, failed to clear the Senate by the end of the session.
- **California:** The House of Medicine came together to defeat AB 3087, a bill that would have created a Commission to set physician and hospital rates for the entire commercial market in CA. The AAO-HNS joined with 18 other national medical organizations to send a letter of opposition to state lawmakers.
- **Minnesota:** A collaborative effort by the Minnesota Academy of Otolaryngology (MAO), the Minnesota Medical Association, and the AAO-HNS, including a [joint letter](#) by MAO and AAO-HNS to the sponsor of the bill and a second one to the [state legislature conferees](#), resulted in advancing a provision on CMV that ultimately was rolled into an omnibus supplemental budget bill (SF 3656). Unfortunately, SF 3656 was vetoed by the Governor due to unrelated concerns with the legislation.

Tracker Monthly Calls:

Thank you to all of our State Trackers who were able to participate in our conference calls during the height of the legislative sessions. We have collectively decided to suspend our monthly calls until December when we will be preparing for the 2019 sessions.

2018 State Legislative Sessions

- Eight states adjourned in May: Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Vermont.
- Three states adjourn in June: Delaware, Louisiana, and Rhode Island.
- Two states adjourn in July: New Hampshire and North Carolina.
- Eight states and DC are typically year round legislatures: California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

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- **Oklahoma:** Working together, the Oklahoma Academy of Otolaryngology (OAO), the Oklahoma State Medical Association, and the AAO-HNS were able to modify SB 1074, an update of the speech-language pathology and audiology licensing act. Our joint effort led to success on multiple issues. However, negotiations on “swallowing” and a few other provisions were not fully resolved when the bill passed. Despite [a joint letter](#) by OAO and AAO-HNS urging a veto to secure additional time to address remaining concerns, Governor Fallin signed the legislation on May 7. Creation of conforming regulations should offer another opportunity to correct remaining issues with the Act.

State Advocacy in the Off-Season

The work in State Advocacy does not stop simply because many of the legislatures are adjourned. You may have noticed the majority of year-round legislatures are high-population states, facing many issues. These are often called “bell weather states” because what happens in those states often portends what will be of interest or concern next year in other states. Therefore, State Trackers for those states and the AAO-HNS must remain vigilant in our advocacy work throughout the year.

Thankfully, the reduced number of active sessions permits an opportunity to review proposed state regulations that may pertain to the specialty. Regulations identified will be reviewed with the appropriate state otolaryngology society to determine whether any actions or comment letters may be necessary.

The off-season is also a time to research new ideas and develop new campaigns. On our May conference call, we briefly discussed the potential for a new inclusionary campaign to reclaim the business of hearing and balance disorders. Stay tuned for more on this proposal in the coming months.

Finally, the off-season can also be a time to review the defeats and successes of the recent past to determine the appropriate path for the future. At the very least, it can be a time to meet and get to know state legislators in their home districts and at educational meetings, such as the National Conference of State Legislatures.

No matter the time or the season, AAO-HNS State Advocacy (legstate@entnet.org) is here for you and happy to support your efforts!