



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

AAO-HNS Supports Greater Access to Hearing Aids with Patient Safety Preserved

The Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017 (H.R. 1652/S. 670) was recently introduced by U.S. Representatives Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Joseph Kennedy III (D-MA) and U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Charles Grassley (R-IA), Johnny Isakson (R-GA), and Maggie Hassan (D-NH). The [AAO-HNS supports access](#) to over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids for adults with mild-to-moderate hearing loss when paired with appropriate patient safety and consumer protections. To ensure patient safety is preserved, the [Academy stands by its recommendation](#) regarding the benefits of a medical evaluation by a physician, followed by a standardized hearing test (via a hearing health professional or appropriate online/technological source), before an individual purchases any type of basic hearing aid or other FDA-regulated assistive hearing device.

Action Request

PROJECT 535 Recruits 20 New Participants

This year's [AAO-HNS/F Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting](#) resulted in the recruitment of 20 additional PROJECT 535 volunteers—thank you! Interested in helping to amplify the Academy's position when Congress debates major issues? [Sign up today](#) to be a PROJECT 535 key contact and help reinforce our message! Contact legfederal@entnet.org for more information.

ENT PAC Exceeds Fundraising Goal

Thanks to the generous contributions of our members, ENT PAC exceeded its fundraising goal at the [AAO-HNS/F 2017 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting](#), raising \$20,000. To help ensure the strength of the Academy's political programs, [make 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).

Action Alert: Urge Your Federal Lawmakers to Cosponsor IPAB Repeal Legislation

The Protecting Seniors' Access to Medicare Act of 2017 (H.R. 849/S. 260) was recently re-introduced in the 115th Congress by U.S. Representative Phil Roe, MD (R-TN), and U.S. Senator John Cornyn (R-TX). The legislation would repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB), thereby ensuring Congress retains its rightful oversight of Medicare payment policies. The AAO-HNS [supports repeal of the IPAB](#) and encourages all members to [contact their federal lawmakers today!](#)

Read the March 2017 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.

Legislative & Political Reports

EHDI Reauthorization Legislation Introduced

Legislation (H.R. 1539/S. 652) to reauthorize the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program was recently re-introduced by U.S. Representatives Brett Guthrie (R-KY) and Doris Matsui (D-CA) and U.S. Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Tim Kaine (D-VA). The EHDI program supports statewide plans that identify infants/children with hearing loss and provides the appropriate early intervention services. The [AAO-HNS supports](#)

H.R. 1539/S. 652 and is working with the hearing health community to urge swift passage of this important legislation.

ACA Repeal Legislation Stalls Temporarily

On Friday, March 24, the “American Health Care Act (AHCA)” was pulled from consideration prior to a vote on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. As Republican leaders revisit their strategy to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, the AAO-HNS will continue its conversations with lawmakers, advocating for affordable access to care for patients and reduced administrative burdens on physicians.

AAO-HNS Joins Stakeholders in Opposing H.R. 1136

The AAO-HNS joined 42 healthcare organizations in [signing a letter opposing](#) the “FDA Deeming Authority Clarity Act” (H.R. 1136). By exempting e-cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products from an important product review designed to protect public health, the bill would significantly weaken FDA’s ability to take prompt action to protect children from the thousands of fruit-and candy-flavored e-cigarettes and cigars.

AAO-HNS Submits Comments for Upcoming FTC Workshop on Hearing Healthcare

On April 6, the AAO-HNS [submitted comments](#) to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in preparation for an April 18 workshop titled, “Now Hear This: Competition, Innovation, and Consumer Protection Issues in Hearing Health Care.” The Academy’s comment letter outlines consumer protection recommendations relating to various assistive hearing devices.

Academy Leaders Visit Capitol Hill

Academy leaders [traveled to Capitol Hill](#) as part of the [AAO-HNS/F 2017 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting](#). Participants met with the offices of Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), as well as Republican and Democrat staff from key committees in the House and Senate. Topics discussed included MACRA, EHDI, OTC hearing aids, IPAB repeal, and other issues of importance to the specialty.

Other News

Successful AAO-HNS/F Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting

Thank you to the attendees of the [AAO-HNS/F 2017 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting](#)! This year’s meeting provided three days of substantive programming, including: the inaugural State OTO Society Roundtable, BOG Committee meetings, several CME-eligible sessions, briefings from Congressional experts, and the opportunity to become more involved with the Academy’s various grassroots and advocacy initiatives. Unable to attend this year? Mark your calendar now for the AAO-HNS/F 2018 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting, scheduled for March 9-12 at the Westin Hotel in Alexandria, VA.

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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