

# STATE-MENT

## MONTHLY STATE TRACKER UPDATE

June 2021

### Legislative Overruns Lead to Many Special Sessions

Changes and delays in the legislative process have led many states to call their representatives back into Special Sessions to resolve critical issues such as annual budgets/appropriations, redistricting, voting rights, taxes, and Medicaid. At least 23 states have already or will call a special session this year. There are no limits on the number of special sessions that can be called in a state and no specific timeline associated with them. Often a special session is called to focus on a specific issue and legislative action is limited to that topic. However, there are some states where parliamentary procedures or legislative processes can take place during a special session to allow for off-topic legislation to be considered and passed. Therefore, advocates with legislation still pending or incomplete when the regular session adjourned, must still remain vigilant during these special periods.

- **ASLP Interstate Compact:** After two years of tireless efforts by AAO-HNS advocates to fix the faulty Audiology/Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC) legislation, congratulations are in order! Out of 14 bills that have passed, eight contain the AAO-HNS/AMA amendments! To truly get a sense of the overall success of this effort, the numbers speak volumes. Starting in 2020 and to-date, ASLP-IC bills were introduced in 29 states; utilizing a variety of tactics, 11 bills were killed and 1 was vetoed by a Governor. Currently, there are three states that have their bills on carryover to 2022 and two of those have already been amended. There are sure to be ASLP compact bills introduced over time in the remaining states, as compacts have become a popular tool for many licensed occupations aiming to work across multiple states with a single primary license. Currently, the ASLP-IC has reached its 10-state minimum to be able to initiate the Compact Commission. The Commission delegates will be meeting in the coming months to create rules and by-laws for the member states.
- **Bills on the Move:** Thirteen states and the District of Columbia are still in regular session to the end of June. At least 24 states have introduced 69 bills on hearing services, one of our tracked priorities. Currently, and of particular note, the “**Act to Increase Access to Hearing Aids**” includes a series of bills being considered in the Massachusetts legislature. MA is one of only two states that does not permit independent otolaryngologists to sell hearing aids, even when dispensed by an audiologist or hearing aid specialist employed by the medical practice. MA SB 211 & 192, HB 366 & 416 each have language to rectify this situation and are supported by the AAO-HNS, the MA Society of Otolaryngology-HNS, and other advocates. These bills were recently heard in the MA Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure and await committee action. Three states, proposing education and screening legislation for **CMV** are still active as follows: MA HB 2338 & SB 1471, NJ SB 3775 and PA HB 1455 & SB 709. As one of the Academy’s priorities, we and our advocates will continue to monitor and support these bills as they advance through the process.
- **Thanks Again!** To our 174 State Trackers and all Academy advocates dedicated to improving the lives of their patients and their profession—we couldn’t do it without you! Keep watching those special sessions and legislation on the move. We hope to see all of you on our call in December to strategize and plan for 2022.

### Tracker Monthly Calls:

Thank you to all of our AAO-HNS State Trackers who have been able to participate in our Zoom calls during the 2021 legislative season. Our monthly calls will resume in December as we prepare for the 2022 sessions.

### 2021 State Legislative Sessions, Who Is In?

- Due to the fluidity of the Sessions and the many special sessions, please continue to check the calendar at: [www.multistate.us/](http://www.multistate.us/)

### Recruiting State Trackers

- The AAO-HNS is always looking for additional State Trackers in all states but especially needs coverage in: Nevada, Rhode Island, and South Dakota. If you know a colleague willing to volunteer, please contact: [legstate@entnet.org](mailto:legstate@entnet.org)