

# STATE-MENT

## MONTHLY STATE TRACKER UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2022

### Healthcare Initiatives Still in the Forefront

Wading into our third year of the pandemic, states are still trying to grapple with the best methods to safely operate their state legislatures and how to address the changing public health needs of their constituents/communities. Currently, and even in the face of ever-shifting priorities, state legislators are attempting to address major healthcare issues such as provider shortages, telehealth, scope of practice, medical liability, CON, substance abuse and mental health, to name only a few. To review some of the Academy's state legislative priorities for this year, see the State Advocacy website at: <https://www.entnet.org/advocacy/state-legislative-advocacy/>.

### Issues of Interest

- **Hearing Care Services:** We are just barely into the 2022 sessions and state trackers are already closely watching 32 hearing care bills in 14 states. Hearing care legislation covers a variety of topics. However, those that reference insurance coverage, hearing aids for children, scope of practice for diagnosing, and fitting and dispensing of hearing care services are of particular interest. With OTC hearing aids about to hit the market this year, there are many attempts at the state level to loosen all requirements related to the provision of hearing aids. This is of great concern as some providers and companies compete for a larger portion of the market share at the potential expense of patients. The AAO-HNS and its advocates are working to ensure patient safety remains paramount as these bills are considered. Bills are active in: FL, KY, MA, MS, NY, WA, VT, SD, AZ, OK, NJ, IL, HI, and IA.
- **Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Compact:** Although the compact has passed the minimum number of states (10) to begin initiation, efforts to draw in additional states continues. Thus far, IN, MO, MS, VT, TN, IL, SC, and WA have seen introduction of the model bill. The Academy, state medical societies, and the AMA continue to work to amend these poorly drafted bills.
- **Cytomegalovirus:** Legislation to educate on CMV, or require screening for CMV, or both, is seeing a resurgence this legislative season. Eight states have introduced bills: FL, PA, NJ, ME, NY, NE, KY, and IN. The Academy is supportive of these bills and is working with State Trackers and patient advocacy groups to advance the legislation.
- **Language Equalify and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K):** Legislation, always controversial, has resurfaced in VA and IA. **Prior Authorization** bills have been introduced in PA, MS, and CO. **Auricular Detoxification** legislation, which has been introduced in UT and WV was discussed by the State Trackers. It was determined through research and consultation that allowing trained acupuncturists to perform such treatments is helpful to many patients. The Academy will not oppose these bills.

### Tracker Monthly Calls:

Thank you to all our AAO-HNS State Trackers who participated in our first two conference calls of the 2022 legislative season. We are off to a great start, and we invite you to participate in our remaining Zoom calls. The calls are the fourth Wednesday of the month (December-June) at 8:00 pm (ET). The dates for the remainder of the season are as follows:

- February 23
- March 23
- April 27
- May 25
- June 22

### 2022 State Legislative Sessions

- There are four states that do not meet this year: Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Texas.
- As of February 10, 42 states and the District of Columbia were in session. Upcoming opening dates include:
  - Arkansas: February 14
  - Wyoming: February 14
  - Louisiana: March 14
  - North Carolina: May 16