NeurosurgeryPAC in Action!

NeurosurgeryPAC The AANS has an active, valuable and effective Political Action Committee, or PAC, which provides organized neurosurgery with vital access to lawmakers on Capitol Hill and allows neurosurgeons to voice their views on critical issues facing their practice and patients. In 2022, NeurosurgeryPAC effectively helped advance neurosurgery’s advocacy agenda.

**NeurosurgeryPAC supports neurosurgery’s advocacy activities:**

- Provide a mechanism to support candidates who share our views on legislation that affects neurosurgery.
- Contributions give us access to lawmakers to present neurosurgery’s policy ideas.

**Improve the health care delivery system.** The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328) extended funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for two years through fiscal year 2029. Medicaid and CHIP will now offer 12 months of continuous coverage for children to ensure that the 40 million children on Medicaid and CHIP have uninterrupted access to health care throughout the year.

**Protect patients’ timely access.** Bipartisan legislation to streamline prior authorization in the Medicare Advantage program — the Improving Seniors’ Timely Access to Care Act (S. 3018 / H.R. 3173) — garnered overwhelming support from 380 members of Congress. The House of Representatives unanimously passed the bill, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued proposed rules that mirror the provisions in this legislation. Compliance with Medicare’s appropriate use criteria program for advanced diagnostic imaging was delayed indefinitely.

**Fix the broken medical liability system.** Legislation based on proven reforms that are in place in California and Texas — the Accessible Care by Curbing Excessive LawSuitS (ACCESS) Act (H.R. 9584) — was introduced. Additional liability protection for volunteers — the Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act (S. 2941 / H.R. 5239) — and legislation to protect providers from COVID-19-related lawsuits — the Coronavirus Provider Protection Act (H.R. 3021) — was considered.

**Alleviate the burdens of electronic health records.** CMS took multiple steps to improve interoperability and reduce burdens associated with data sharing. To improve mental health among health care professionals, the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act was signed into law (P.L. 117-105).

**Support Quality Residency Training**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 funded 200 additional Medicare graduate medical education (GME) positions and increased funding for the Children’s Hospital GME. Additionally, legislation to add 14,000 Medicare-funded residency training positions and defer medical student loan interest during residency — the Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act (S. 834 / H.R 2256) and the Resident Education Deferred Interest Act (S. 3658 / H.R. 4122), respectively — achieved strong bipartisan support.

**Continue progress with medical innovation**

Increased funding for the National Institutes of Health and Food and Drug Administration (FDA), whose research investments are responsible for incalculable medical breakthroughs, was included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. The legislation also contains numerous FDA reforms, including measures to update the agency’s accelerated approval pathway and increase diversity in clinical trials.

**Champion fair reimbursement**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 mitigated steep Medicare cuts, forestalling 6.5% of an 8.5% payment cut in 2023. The bill also provided an additional 1.25% of relief to alleviate future cuts in 2024. Neurosurgery led two amicus briefs in support of lawsuits challenging the process for resolving payment disputes between commercial health plans and providers under the No Surprises Act. Physicians prevailed in both lawsuits.

For more information, visit:

aans.org/en/Advocacy/NeurosurgeryPAC