

2023 Legislative & Regulatory Priorities and Accomplishments

The American Association of Neurological Surgeons and the Congress of Neurological Surgeons made significant strides in accomplishing their 2023 [legislative and regulatory agenda](#), thus ensuring that neurosurgical patients continue to have timely access to quality care.

PROTECT PATIENTS' TIMELY ACCESS TO CARE

In 2022, the House of Representatives unanimously passed bipartisan legislation to streamline prior authorization in the Medicare Advantage program, the ***Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act*** (S. 3018 / H.R. 3173). In 2023, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services cleared its final rule that aligns with provisions in this legislation by tackling the overuse and abuse of prior authorization by Medicare Advantage plans.

In addition, the ***Safe Step Act*** (H.R. 2630) to provide an exceptions process for medication step therapy protocols and the ***GOLD CARD Act*** (H.R. 4968) to exempt qualified physicians from prior authorization requirements were introduced.

CHAMPION FAIR REIMBURSEMENT

The ***Strengthening Medicare for Patients and Providers Act*** (H.R. 2447) was introduced. It would provide an annual inflation update for Medicare physician payments based on the Medicare Economic Index MEI. In addition, the ***Provider Reimbursement Stability Act*** (H.R. 6371) would modify Medicare's budget neutrality rules and was passed by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

FIX THE BROKEN MEDICAL LIABILITY SYSTEM

Legislation to provide liability protection for volunteers during a declared national disaster — the ***Good Samaritan Health Professionals Act*** (H.R. 2819) was considered.

ALLEVIATE THE BURDENS OF ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

The Office of National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a [proposal](#) updating the ONC Health IT Certification Program to further advance interoperability, improve transparency, and support the access, exchange, and use of electronic health information.

SUPPORT QUALITY RESIDENT TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Legislation to add 14,000 Medicare-funded residency training positions and defer medical student loan interest during medical residency — the ***Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act*** (S. 1302 / H.R. 2389) and the ***Resident Education Deferred Interest Act*** (S. 704 / H.R. 1202), respectively — achieved strong bipartisan support. Additionally, the ***Children's Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act*** (H.R. 3887) to extend funding through FY 2028 was passed by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

IMPROVE COMPETITION IN THE HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM

The ***Patient Access to Higher Quality Care Act*** (S. 470 / H.R. 977) to repeal the Affordable Care Act's prohibition on expanding physician-led hospitals was introduced in the House and Senate.

CONTINUE PROGRESS WITH MEDICAL INNOVATION

Ellie's Law (S. 895 / H.R. 902) was introduced and would provide funding at the National Institutes of Health to study brain aneurysms. Additionally, the ***Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act 2.0*** (S. 1624 / H.R. 3391) would provide research funding to study pediatric diseases and was passed by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Also, the ***Sunshine Act*** (H.R. 4402) would allow the provision of medical journal reprints to physicians without open Payments Program reporting.



AANS/CNS Washington Committee for Neurological Surgery



Congress of Neurological Surgeons