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# Health Policy and Legislative Advocacy/Activism for the Advanced Practice Provider

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## Health Policy and Legislative Advocacy/Activism for the APP

### Abstract

Health Policy aims to address the needs of patient communities and overall health outcomes. Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) which include nurse practitioners and physician assistants are a critical workforce in delivering healthcare to urology patients. APPs provide quality healthcare in the United States across many disciplines and have demonstrated the ability to improve the much-needed access to healthcare. Advocacy (supporting a cause) and activism (direct vigorous action in support of a cause) are essential to achieve health policy initiatives aligned with goals and objectives of the urology community as well as our respective disciplines. It is imperative to be familiar with these initiatives and when called upon, to articulate these agendas. The AUA acknowledges the importance of engaging with lawmakers and the goal of raising awareness on key urologic policy issues to drive meaningful change. The AUA advocates for the specialty of urology and works at the federal and state level on behalf of its members and patients. State advocacy is encouraged and the AUA supports members to become effective state-level advocates to address legislation and regulations affecting their local communities. Federal and state legislative priorities are set annually, and others may be considered as the need arises.

## Health Policy and Legislative Advocacy/Activism for the APP

### Objectives

- Appreciate the need for Legislative Advocacy/Activism in your professional practice.
- Articulate the AUA Legislative Priorities for 2026.
- Become familiar with the legislative visit.
- Explore opportunities for participation at the state and federal levels.

## Advocacy

Merriam-Webster defines  
advocacy as “the act or process  
of supporting a cause or  
proposal”

## Activism

Merriam-Webster defines  
activism is “a doctrine or practice that  
emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in  
support of or opposition to one side of a  
controversial issue”

## Health Policy and Legislative Advocacy/Activism for the APP

**Advanced Practice Providers (APPs)** provide quality healthcare in the United States and have demonstrated that they can improve much-needed access to health care for patients.

It is imperative that APPs are active in advocacy for issues that remove barriers and ensure direct access to patients for their services.

## Health Policy and Legislative Advocacy/Activism for the APP

### Health Policy Initiatives

Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and Physician Assistants (PA-Cs) have health policy initiatives and being familiar with these initiatives is imperative when called upon to articulate these agendas.

## Urology Workforce

APPs are a **critical workforce** in delivering healthcare to urology patients !

**In the U.S.**

- NPs 461,000
- PA-Cs 190,000
- Physicians 1,073,616
- Urologists 14,274
- Unclear on exact # of Urology APPs



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Advanced practice providers: Make advocacy part of your professional life



"It is imperative that APPs are active in advocacy for issues that remove barriers and ensure direct access to patients for their services," writes Adele M. Caruso, DNP, CRNP.

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## What are the AUA Legislative Priorities 2026 ?

- Protect Medicare Reimbursement Rates
- Reform Prior Authorization
- Establish an Office of Men's Health at HHS

## Protect Medicare Reimbursement

### Issue

- Medicare payments to physician offices have declined 33% from 2001 to 2025 when adjusted for inflation. Also, CMS made arbitrary cuts for 2026 that unfairly targeted specialty providers.

### The Asks

- Cosponsor ***The Strengthening Medicare for Patients and Providers Act (H.R. 6160)***, which would adjust fees by inflation for practice costs.
- Cosponsor ***The Efficiency Adjustment Delay Act (H.R. 7520)***, which would delay the efficiency adjustment until 2030 and require CMS to produce a study on the issue.

Urology Advocacy Summit, 2026

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## Reform Prior Authorization

### Issue

- Prior authorization is a health insurance utilization management tool that requires healthcare professionals to obtain advance approval from a plan before a prescription medication or medical service qualifies for payment and can be delivered to the patient. The process of obtaining approval from the insurance company is often lengthy and can lead to significant delays in providing necessary care.

### The Asks

- Cosponsor ***The Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act (S.1816/H.R. 3514)***, which imposes new transparency requirements to shore up prior authorization practices and Medicare Advantage plans. The bill codifies regulatory changes previously enacted in 2024 and reflects similar legislation that passed the House of Representatives unanimously by voice vote during the 117th Congress. The AUA, along with more than 230 national and state organizations from across the medical community, support this legislation.

## Reform Prior Authorization

### The Asks

- Cosponsor ***The Seniors Deserve Smarter (Streamlined Medical Approvals for Timely, Efficient Recovery) Care Act (S.3484/H.R.5940)***, which prohibits CMS from implementing the WISeR model or any similar model in traditional Medicare, thereby preserving and protecting timely access to care for enrollees.

## Establish an Office of Men's Health at HHS

### Issue

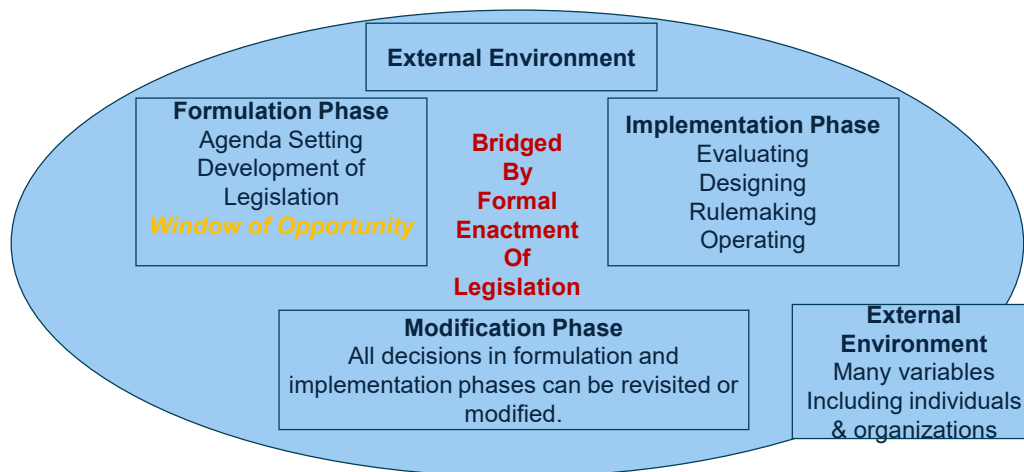
- The status of men's health in the United states is alarming and getting worse. Men face unique health challenges including shorter lifespans, higher rates of disease, and higher suicide rates. The Department of Health and Human Services should establish an Office of Men's Health to promote better health outcomes for men across the country.

### The Asks

- Cosponsor ***The State of Men's Health Act, H.R. 7602***, which would establish an Office of Men's Health under the Assistant Secretary for Health.

Urology Advocacy Summit, 2026

## Three Phases of the Policymaking Process



- A **window of opportunity** opens for possible progression of issues through formulation, enactment, implementation, and modification when there is a favorable confluence of problems, possible solutions, and political circumstances. (Kingdon, 2010, Longest, 2016)

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## Window of Opportunity

A *window of opportunity* opens for possible progression of issues through formulation, enactment, implementation, and modification when there is a favorable confluence of problems, possible solutions, and political circumstances.

Kingdon, 2010, Longest, 2016

## Health Policy and Legislative Advocacy/Activism for the APP

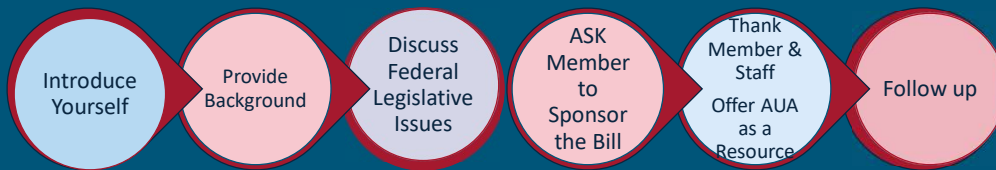
- Annual Urology Advocacy *Summit* Event held in **Washington, D.C.**
- Agenda w/ Health Policy Experts
- Legislative/Congressional visits
- Special Events
- Date for next year is March 1-3, 2027

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# Legislative Visit

## What is the Ask?



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## Urology Advocacy Summit 2026



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## Regional and National Participation

- **Vision for APPs:** Health Policy participation within Urology
- APP Representatives from the 8 Sections within the AUA

## Health Policy and Legislative Advocacy/Activism for the APP

### MAAUA Regional Initiative



#### MA-AUA Policy Proposal to support a MA-AUA APP to attend the AUA Annual Advocacy Summit 2025

- **Purpose:** The objective of this policy is to promote MA-AUA APP advocacy endeavors and to support an opportunity for a MA-AUA APP member to join the urologic community on Capitol Hill each year by attending the AUA Annual Advocacy Summit. The MA-AUA section acknowledges the importance of engaging with lawmakers and the goal of raising awareness on critical urologic policy issues and to drive meaningful change for Physician and APP providers and patients.
- **Scope:** The policy applies to an active MA-AUA member (DC, DE, MD, NJ, PA, VA, WI) according to the current MA-AUA bylaws. The primary focus is to mentor an Early or Mid-career candidate from the section.
- **Roles and responsibilities:** The MA-AUA Health Policy Committee will review the APP applications and approve the candidate.
- **Procedures:** The call for candidates will be sent out following the annual Mid-Atlantic section meeting.
  - The application deadline TBD (November).
  - The Health Policy Committee will approve the candidate at a designated committee meeting or as determined by the committee.
  - The candidate will be notified by e-mail prior to the end of the calendar year.
  - The candidate will be reimbursed for travel expenses per the MA-AUA & AUA Policies.



#### AUA Annual Advocacy Summit

[MA-AUA will support one APP section candidate annually]

#### Application:

Name:  
Affiliation:  
MA-AUA Section:  
MA-AUA Member Status:  
AUA Member No:  
Motivation to attend the AUA Annual Advocacy Summit: [Limit 500 words]

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## Federal & State Advocacy in Action !



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Pennsylvania Coalition of Nurse Practitioners | Adele Caruso, DNP, CRNP, FAANP, PCNP Past President

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