

American Association of Orthodontists Political Action Committee (AAOPAC)

The AAOPAC and the AAO Council on Governmental Affairs had an informal meeting during the AAO Annual Session in Washington, D.C. on May 8.

The AAO hosted its 2018 Professional Advocacy Conference in conjunction with the Annual Session. We planned it that way in an effort to take advantage of the fact that we had so many members already near Capitol Hill – allowing us to involve more AAO members in advocacy efforts, at less cost to the AAO. The results, as you can see from the attached survey responses, demonstrate that the members who participated thought it was a great value to both them and the AAO.

We were able to take the AAO's message to a record number of legislative offices while also effectively involving AAO members in the effort. Our hope and goal is to build on that effort and encourage AAO members to remain engaged at both the national level as well as the state level, where much of the recent advocacy efforts have been targeted.

The AAOPAC and the AAO Council on Governmental Affairs are scheduled to meet again in Washington, D.C., September 24-25, 2018.

Recent legislative activities affecting AAO members and our patients.

First, on July 24, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Protect Medical Innovation Act (H.R. 184), an AAO-endorsed bill that would permanently repeal the medical device tax. See <https://www.aainfo.org/news/2018/07/medical-device-tax-repeal-passes-house>. As you may know, if the medical device tax is not repealed, it will most certainly affect each of our practices because we would be taxed for orthodontic appliances. Thus, we are working hard to see this legislation have success in the Senate as well.

Then, on July 25, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Increasing Access to Lower Premium Plans and Expanding Health Savings Accounts Act of 2018 (H.R. 6311). See <https://www.aainfo.org/news/2018/07/house-representatives-passes-key-element-raise-act>. Included in the House's passage of H.R. 6311 is the AAO's own RAISE Act, which was originally introduced by Congressman **Steve Stivers** (R-OH), who relied heavily on AAO members' FSA experiences in sponsoring that legislation. If H.R. 6311 becomes law, an employee's hard-earned FSA contribution would stay theirs from year to year, for an amount up to three times the annual limit before needing to be spent down, thus changing the current "use it or lose it rule." If the Bill passes, imagine how many patients could use saved FSA contributions to pay for orthodontic care.

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