

2025 EDITION

PHYSICIAN ADVOCACY



A GUIDE TO ADVOCACY IN IOWA
AND BEYOND



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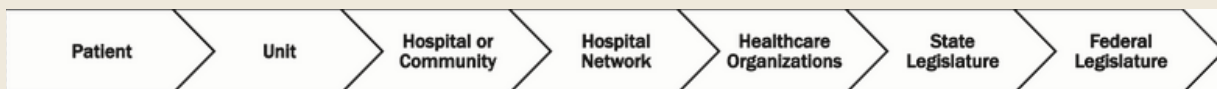
WHAT IS ADVOCACY?



“Action by a physician to promote those social, economic, educational, and political changes that ameliorate the suffering and threats to human health and well-being that he or she identifies through his or her professional work and expertise.” (Earnest et al., 2010)

Advocacy can take many forms. From promoting a policy change in your hospital’s medicine unit to consulting on a federal healthcare bill, there are many ways to get involved!

- Advocacy should be focused on your specialty or area of expertise.
- Advocacy can be done across a spectrum, from the bedside to the federal government level.
- It doesn’t have to be complicated or time consuming. Even small actions can have a large effect!



Healthcare policy, laws, and regulations affect:

- Patient outcomes
- The practice of medicine
- Social determinants of health
- Public health and safety

It is important to share your experience and perspective as a physician, since you see how these policies impact your patient’s everyday lives, health outcomes, and medical system as a whole. Many healthcare policies have been made without a single health care worker consulted, and patients often suffer the consequences.

HOW TO ADVOCATE

- **Find an issue you are passionate about:** injustices witnessed in outpatient clinic or inpatient setting, lack of community partnerships, insurance or policies that affect access to care
- **Define the problem:** Do your research! When did it start, who does it affect, how has this problem evolved, who are the stake holders, what level does the problem exist within (community, state, national)
- **Identify strategic partners:** join a group or identify if there is a community, state, or national partner you can get involved with
- **Act:** work with group or partners to develop a plan to address the issue, for example-contacting representatives, hosting town hall, demonstration, meeting with hospital leadership, etc
- **Communicate:** amplify your message though follow up emails, letters, phone calls, presentations to stakeholders, social media, op eds or newsletters



HOW TO ADVOCATE

Ways to get involved:

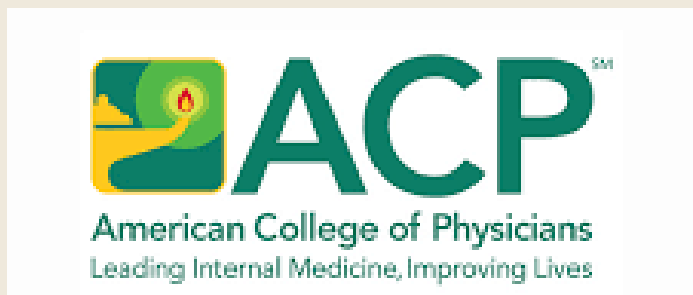
- Join an organization
 - Community: Iowa PNHP
 - State: IMS
 - National: ACP, AMA, SGIM
- Attend an advocacy event, such as a physician “Day on the Hill”
- Contact your representatives
 - Schedule a meeting with your representative or someone from their office
 - Call, email, or write them a letter
 - Attend one of their town halls
- Educate the public
 - Write opinion pieces for local publications
 - Participate in media interviews
 - Speak at local events
- Help write policy
 - Consult on a bill
 - Submit a policy proposal or help write a bill



U.S. Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA), far left, speaks with Leadership Day attendees from ACP. Image by Greg Fiume

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Joining an organization with legislative priorities that align with your values can be an easy way to get involved with advocacy events and connect with other physician advocates.



American College of Physicians

Legislative Priorities:

- Reducing administrative burden
- Ensuring access to care
- Strengthening internal medicine and primary care work force
- Prescription drug affordability
- Investing in public health initiatives
- Promoting physician-led care



American Medical Association

Legislative Priorities:

- Fixing prior authorization
- Reforming Medicare payment
- Fighting scope creep
- Reducing physician burnout
- Making technology work for physicians



Society of General Internal Medicine

Legislative Priorities:

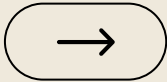
- Equitable Medicare reimbursement policies
- Adequate funding for health professionals training
- Support for health services research



Physicians for a National Health Program

Legislative Priorities:

- Establishing universal healthcare coverage that is publicly financed
- Reducing healthcare costs
- Opposing corporate-based, for-profit healthcare systems



IOWA MEDICAL SOCIETY

Iowa Medical Society is the largest professional organization for Iowa physicians and exerts a large healthcare policy influence at the state legislative level. Anyone who is a staff or resident physician or medical student can join. The organization has its own political action committee (IMPAC) which works to build relationships with state legislators and ensure IMS's legislative priorities are heard.

2025 Legislative Priorities

Issue	Description
Expand Physician Workforce	<p>The physician shortage in Iowa is in crisis. To aid in the recruitment and retention of physicians, IMS supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding for the Rural Physician Loan Repayment Program • Increase funding for additional positions within existing residency and fellowship programs • Seek opportunities for new residency and fellowship programs for Iowa's most in-need specialties • Support policy efforts to implement the Iowa Rural Healthcare Workforce Strategic Action Plan • Pursue tax credit incentives for preceptors and new physicians beginning their practice in Iowa
Reform Prior Authorization	<p>IMS supports legislation that reduces administrative red tape and reforms prior authorization. Physicians spend too much time wading through unnecessary administrative burden, contributing to burnout, instead of spending time with patients.</p>

Issue	Description
Expand Access to Care	<p>IMS values the sanctity of the patient-physician relationship and use of evidence-based medicine to make health care decisions for all patients. IMS supports the enhancement of maternal health, mental health, and substance use services available to Iowans.</p>
Support Rate Enhancements	<p>IMS will work with the Department of Health & Human Services to implement a plan for increasing physician reimbursement rates, expanding upon the successful efforts with behavioral health rates.</p>
Protect Scope of Practice	<p>IMS will champion the practice of medicine that recognizes medical training, expertise in scope allowances, stopping any proposed expansions that threaten patient safety, and support efforts to better clarify the patient awareness of providers' training.</p>

Sign Up for Alerts

Enter your information below to sign up.



Sign up for email policy alerts to help track bills and their status during the legislative session. This can be helpful in determining when to reach out to your representative about an upcoming committee or floor vote for important healthcare bills. Alert sign up can be found on IMS's website at www.iowamedical.org/action-center.

ADVOCACY EVENTS



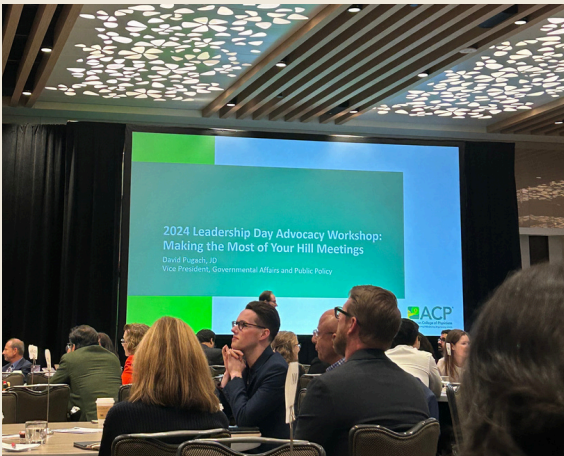
Iowa Physician Day on the Hill

What: event hosted by Iowa Medical Society where physicians & medical students gather at the State Capitol to discuss IMS's legislative priorities and supported bills with legislators

Where: Des Moines

When: annually in February

Who: any staff physician, resident physician, or medical student in any specialty who resides in Iowa



ACP Leadership Day

What: 2 day event with formal instruction on healthcare advocacy and policy debriefing followed by organized meetings with federal representatives to discuss ACP sponsored bills

Where: Washington D.C.

When: annually in May

Who: any internal medicine physician who is a member of ACP



Iowa Medical Society Town Halls & Policy Forums

What: meetings to determine IMS's yearly legislative priorities and discuss policy proposals written by members

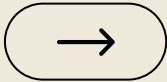
Where: varies

When: several times a year

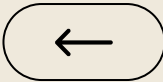
Who: any physician or medical student who is a member of Iowa Medical Society

IOWA LEGISLATURE

2025

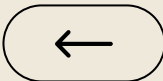
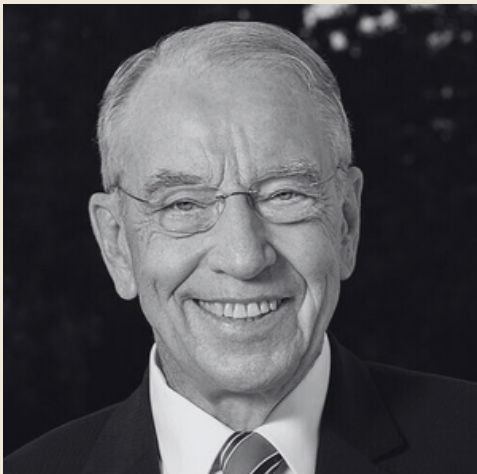


CONGRESSIONAL OFFICIALS



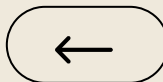
KIM REYNOLDS

Iowa Governor
Political Party: Republican
Current Term: 2022-2026
Office Contact: (515) 281-5211



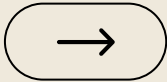
CHUCK GRASSLEY

U.S. Senator
Political Party: Republican
Current Term: 2022- 2026
Office Contact: (202) 224-3744 (D.C office)
(515) 288-1145 (Cedar Rapids office)

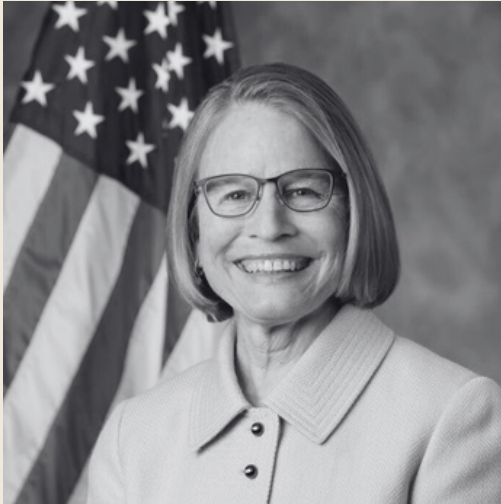


JONI ERNST

U.S. Senator
Political Party: Republican
Current Term: 2022-2026
Office Contact:: (202) 224-3254 (D.C. office)
319) 365-4504 (Cedar Rapids office)



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICIALS



MARIANETTE MILLER-MEEKS

U.S. Representative, District 1
Political Party: Republican
Current Term: 2024-2026
Office Contact: (202) 225-6576 (D.C.)
(563) 232-0930 (Davenport)



ASHLEY HINSON

U.S. Representative, District 2
Political Party: Republican
Current Term: 2024-2026
Office Contact: (202) 225-2911 (D.C.)
(319) 364-2288 (Cedar Rapids)



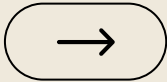
ZACH NUNN

U.S. Representative, District 3
Political Party: Republican
Current Term: 2024-2026
Office Contact: (202) 225-5476 (D.C.)
(641) 220-9641. (Ottumwa)



RANDY FEENSTRA

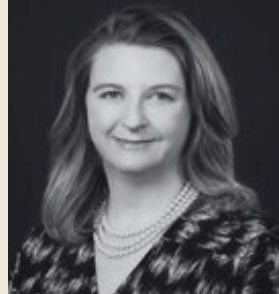
U.S. Representative, District 4
Political Party: Republican
Current Term: 2024 - 2026
Office Contact: (202) 225-4426 (D.C.)
(515) 302-7060 (Fort Dodge)



STATE CONGRESSIONAL OFFICIALS



DAVID JACOBY
State Representative
District 86
Political Party: Democrat
Current Term: 2024 - 2026
Office Contact: 515.281.3221
david.jacoby@legis.iowa.gov



AMY NIELSEN
State Representative
District 85
Political Party: Democrat
Current Term: 2024 - 2026
Office Contact: 515.281.3221
amy.nielsen@legis.iowa.gov



ELINOR LEVIN
State Representative
District 89
Political Party: Democrat
Current Term: 2024 - 2026
Office Contact: 515.281.3221
elinor.levin@legis.iowa.gov



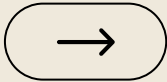
ADAM ZABNER
State Representative
District 90
Political Party: Democrat
Current Term: 2024 - 2026
Office Contact: 515.281.3221
adam.zabner@legis.iowa.gov



ZACH WAHLS
State Senator
District 43
Political Party: Democrat
Current Term: 2024 - 2026
Office Contact: 515.281.3371
zach.wahls@legis.iowa.gov



JANICE WEINER
State Senator
District 45
Political Party: Democrat
Current Term: 2024 - 2026
Office Contact: 515.281.3371
janice.weiner@legis.iowa.gov



LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

IDEA

Bill written and sponsored by legislator or committee



Bill introduced to and discussed by committee in House or Senate



Committee passes bill



Bill put to vote and passed on chamber floor



Bill put to vote and passed on *opposite* chamber floor



Bill sent to Governor's desk for signature



LAW

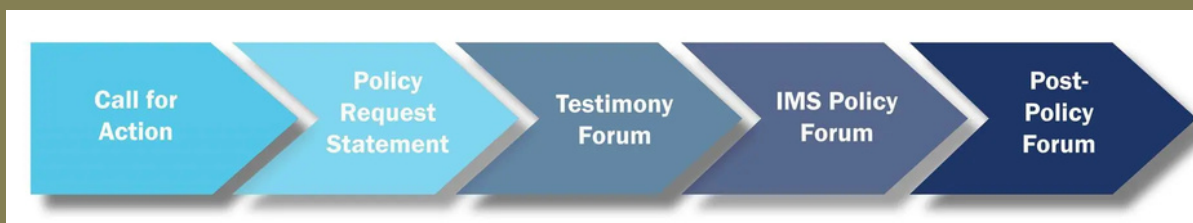
Making it through this entire process is rare! Only 10% of introduced bills made it to the Governor's desk during the 2024 Iowa Legislative Session.

IOWA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- January through April
- 2 "funnel" deadlines
 - **February 16:** bills introduced in one chamber must receive approval from a full committee in that chamber
 - **March 15:** bills must pass floor vote in the chamber in which they were introduced and pass through a committee in the opposite chamber
- If bills don't reach these milestones in time, they are considered "dead"
- If bills don't make it through "the funnel" they can still be resurrected by being added as amendments to other live bills

WRITING POLICY

Are you passionate about a health care issue but can't find any policy or bills supporting it? You (or a group) can write a policy request statement for the Iowa Medical Society!



- Policy request statements are an ask or concern that you may have that you want IMS to take action on.
- The policy reform process involves 3 stages (call to action, testimony forum, policy forum). Time frame is from August to September.
- **Call to action** is the time frame where members are encouraged to submit policy request statements. Staff at IMS may be able to assist with statements
- **Testimony forum** is the time where members can review the policy request statements made and make comments or contribute to discussion regarding policy requests
- **Policy forum** is when the policies are either accepted, amended, rejected, tabled, or sent to an ad hoc committee for further discussion. Policies that are accepted are used to guide further action - such as drafting bills to be submitted during legislative sessions.

Policy requests can be submitted to Iowa Medical Society via email at impolicy@iowamedical.org

RESOURCES

Earnest, M. A. (2010). What is physician advocacy? Duke University School of Medicine

Harvard Medical School. (n.d.). Physicians as advocates for social change. Harvard Medical School

Luft L. M. (2017). The essential role of physician as advocate: how and why we pass it on. Canadian medical education journal, 8(3), e109–e116.

Iowa Medical Society: www.iowamedical.org

AMA Advocacy: www.ama-assn.org/health-care-advocacy

ACP Advocacy: www.acponline.org/advocacy

SGIM Advocacy: www.sgim.org/advocacy-policy

Physicians for a National Health Program: www.pnhp.org

Iowa Bill Tracker: www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/billtracking

Sign up to join the Physicians for a National Health Program Iowa Chapter's email list here:

