



COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
Sunday Oct. 13, 2019

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**COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2019**

Region: Great Lakes

Chair: Suzanne M. Falkenberry, MD

Staff: Matt Daigle

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

Kathryn A. Colby, MD, PhD, Illinois Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

Sohail Hasan, MD, Illinois Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

Andrew W. Tharp, MD, Indiana Academy of Ophthalmology

Timothy P. Page, MD, Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

Carla Ford, MD, Ohio Ophthalmological Society

W. Walker Motley, MD, Ohio Ophthalmological Society

Suzanne M. Falkenberry, MD, Wisconsin Academy of Ophthalmology

Guests and Staff

- Matt Daigle, Academy staff
- Paul Chan, MD, Board of Trustees
- Andrew Schachat, MD, Board of Trustees
- Reggie Fields, Executive Director, Ohio Ophthalmological Society
- Joseph Coney, MD, President, Ohio Ophthalmological Society
- Rich Paul, Executive Director, Illinois Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
- Brianna Clarksen, Associate Director, Wisconsin Academy of Ophthalmology
- Thomas Aaberg, Jr., MD, Past President, Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Maura Campbell, Executive Director, Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Anna Luisa DiLorenzo, MD, Past President, Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Philip Hessburg, MD, Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Scott Westhouse, DO Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Yara Catoira-Boyle, MD, President, Indiana Academy of Ophthalmology
- Kim Williams, Executive Director, Indiana Academy of Ophthalmology
- Aaron Holtebeck, MD, Member, Committee for State Organizational Development

II. ACADEMY UPDATES/REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update - *Aaron Holtebeck, MD*

- Scope expansion mushrooming - 24 states threatened, Great Lakes region largely spared but other region sometimes hit wholesale
- Optometry using a model bill with exclusionary list, but verbiage only prohibits invasive procedures.
- 14 victories in 2019, but cost us millions to fight these battles, and many were narrow wins.
- Loss in Arkansas, shows how important every state pays attention to their relationships with state lawmakers

- Anti-technology legislation in several states, Academy opposes efforts to prohibit adoption of these platforms that expand access
 - LDP 2021 class solicitation in several months for any state without a person in the current class.
- B. OPHTHPAC Update – *Sohail Hasan, MD*
- OPHTHPAC is having a good meeting fundraising-wise
 - Urges contribution via text by messaging MDEYE to 41444
 - 77 percent of council has donated to OPHTHPAC.
 - Efforts underway to apply E/M code increases to postoperative visits.
 - Bill Clifford a candidate for Congress, has Academy’s support.
 - OPHTHPAC helped elect a NC physician to Congress in September.
 - Mid-Year Forum is April 25.

III. REVIEW OF ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Illinois Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

- No scope battles at the moment.
- Meeting with legislators to leverage “fundraising season.”
- New social media coordinator is helping increase profile and visibility.
- Doctor of the Week program, during legislative session one ophthalmologist is assigned to spend a day in the capital with lobbyist meeting lawmakers, establishing relationships but not asking for anything in particular.
- Keeping lobbying team in place, which is helping keep certain issues at bay.
- State governor has family ties to ophthalmology
- Stable financially.
- ISEPS Global Ophthalmology Foundation, helping support eye care projects in Vietnam, awarding scholarships to let foreign ophthalmologists visit Chicago to observe.
- 16th annual joint conference with ISEPS, will have a foundation gala with lawmakers in attendance.
- Illinois ambassador program to engage young ophthalmologists in advocacy.
- Resident seat on society board to get them involved.

Indiana Academy of Ophthalmology

- No scope battles to report.
- American Legion screening was a success in August.
- Advocacy win when Medicaid audit was postponed; relationships with lawmakers helped.
- Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind., reached out establish health care committee to hear from physicians. Focusing on de-regulation, drug prices.

Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

- No scope issues but possible target in the future, already meeting with lawmakers in Lansing to keep the lines of communication open.
- Working to advance early eye drop prescription refills, with society president testifying before committee soon.
- Expanded community outreach to inner city communities and veterans.
- Gave money to Health Can’t Wait initiative, addresses prior authorization and step therapy, 11 practices supplied stories.

Ohio Ophthalmological Society

- No scope issues.

- Surprise billing legislation was defeated, would have taken negotiation off the table for providers.
- Trainee position on the state society board has helped ID a young leader who want to start a YO society in state.
- Play Hard, Don't Blink program for protective eyewear for youth athletes
- Looking to produce videos on eye safety targeted at kids (GoNoodle)

Wisconsin Academy of Ophthalmology

- Legislative session ends in January and remains quiet.
- Doctor Day in May in conjunction with others in medicine, 20 ophthalmologists among 500 physicians.
- Longtime lobbyist passed away recently, so new lobbyist enlisted who is also supporting subspecialty groups.
- Supporting state medical society's PA scope issue.
- Interested in understanding state-level based education to optometry

IV. CLOSE

- Discussion of historical background on Great Lake region's role in the policies that are now shaping the AAO2AAO conversation.
- Suggest resuscitation of previous CAR that would establish American Academy of Ophthalmology Associates.



COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
Sunday, October 13, 2019

Region: Heartland
Chair: Elizabeth Gauger, MD
Staff: Betty Lucas

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

Jessica Claussen, MD, Councilor, South Dakota Academy of Ophthalmology
Tom Graul, MD, Councilor, Nebraska Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons and OphthPAC
Michelle K. Atchison, MD, Councilor, North Dakota Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
Linda Tsai, MD, Councilor, Missouri Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
Will Parke III, MD, Alternate Councilor and President-elect, Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology
Elizabeth Gauger, MD, Councilor, Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology
Paul Weishaar, MD, Councilor, Kansas Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

Guests and Staff

John Peters, MD, Assoc. Secretary for Governmental Affairs
Tyler Verry, CAE Exec Dir, Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology
Steven Shields, MD, President, Missouri Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
Xi Kathryn Sun, President elect, Missouri Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
William Clifford, MD, AAO Board of Trustees
D Scott Penman, Assoc. Executive Director, Missouri Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

II. Academy Updates/Requests for Information

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update – John Peters, MD

- Legislative battles continue. Optometry’s legislative model is using dangerous exclusionary tactics, listing certain things they won’t be allowed to do, everything else they can, some injections, some scalpel. They classically call everything “procedures.”
- Let your legislators know what is and what is not surgery.
- There have been Multiple victories, Alabama, Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland. Successfully stopped anti-technology legislation in Oregon and Washington.
- Massachusetts has an active bill, Montana, Vermont, and Utah were expecting bills to come through that did not.
- The big loss in Arkansas was due to insufficient grass roots efforts. Many Arkansas legislators had already promised their votes. Cannot express enough, have your grass roots together and get to know your legislators.
- Surgical Scope fund is expecting 20 or more battles in 2020. Please support the Surgical Scope fund.

- State Affairs created an information dashboard for your states/executive directors to use.
- Leadership Development Program's 21st class of 2019 met yesterday, hosted a reception last night. March 2020 is the next solicitation for 2023 nominees.

B. OPHTHPAC Update – Tom Graul, MD

- Primary mission of OphthPAC is to ensure ophthalmologist and patient abuses are relayed and protected at the federal level.
- OphthPAC dollars go to well researched candidates who are friendly to ophthalmology and medicine, to support our issues.
- OphthPAC is at 22% of its 2-yr fundraising goal. If you want things to go your way, give to OphthPAC. You can text MDI 41444, receive a link. Our goal is 100 % giving by councilors, we are at 77%. Please give today.
- Although we suffered a loss with cataract surgery reimbursement, it is also considered a win, because the cuts proposed were dramatically greater. Federal Affairs mitigated the cuts down to 15%.
- Center for Medicaid Services plans to increase reimbursement for non-surgical visits. The hope is reimbursement will also go up for surgical visits. OphthPAC is putting pressure on Center for Medicaid Services, calling members in congress to increase medical physician pay, scheduled for 2020, hoping for a 6-yr freeze.
- Support for physicians to get elected inside and outside of ophthalmology helps represent all our interests. Ophthpac helped a urologist get elected and is helping Bill Clifford, running in the 1st congressional dist. Please Support his campaign.
- OphthPAC is one of the only physician PAC's that does not give exclusively to one party. The committee researches and recommends candidates, no matter the party.
- Don't miss Congressional Advocacy Day, April 22-23 where the Academy pairs senators and congressmen with AAO members. 45 % of members paired. If you are interested, let us know.

III. Key Society Highlights

South Dakota

- Optometry has two codes going in front of the Board of Optometry rules hearing for approval, one is for IPL, the other is Mask. Anticipated approval, then goes to the legislative appeals process.
- South Dakota society, with their shared lobbyist from the Medical Association, is sending a letter prior to the hearing. Dermatology, and Plastics are also sending letters to the board. President, Gail Burnard, will present at the board hearing next week.
- Because IPL is already being done by estheticians, this may be an uphill battle. Makes it hard to say optometry can't do IPL. It's a slippery slope issue. Letter to the board takes the stance that doing tissue alteration is going against the definition of surgery.
- South Dakota had a definition of surgery. Optometry ran this through. The board of optometry makes their own decision, in essence they regulate themselves. Sending a letter to them, would be telling them they don't know what they are doing. If passed, it goes to a rules hearing.
 - **Comment:** Optometrists are already doing IPL in VA, and Missouri, maybe Idaho. When this first came up with Lipaflow. If optometrists are already doing IPL, it may not have to go to their board for approval.

North Dakota

- In its 2nd year legislative cycle.
- Had a daylong board meeting to engage members, to get more participation throughout the state, focusing on Fargo and Bismarck.
- Executive director from the North Dakota Medical Association has good relationships with the lobbyist from the optometry board, gives us head's up of what they are planning.

Minnesota

- Has a lot of legislative action on the horizon.
- Optometry introduced bills in both chambers winter 2019, orals, CAI, Anti virals.
- They've not been heard in the state House and Senate. We currently are in negotiation with the MOA, and the Senate and House Health and Human Service Committee chairs and are confident they won't be heard in committee this year.
- Optometry board asked to meet with ophthalmology. Three representatives and a transcriptionist attended the meeting. Ophthalmology said they did not have board approval to make any comments, and let optometry talk and lay out their playbook. In the fall both groups will meet again, to find middle ground.
- Dan Briceland gave fantastic speech and feedback to the Minnesota society.
- Minnesota has a well-funded SOS fund from a decade ago. They are considering using it to fight current legislation and support proactive surgery by surgery, with feedback.
- This is a relatively ambitious move, but the society is well positioned with a large, engaged board and their current President has political connections.
- Minnesota will apply for Scope fund support; however, they may be at the bottom of the list. They have their own funds and have asked for guidance introducing definition of surgery legislation.
 - **Reply:** Maryland had experience doing this. As part of their negotiations they instituted a surgery definition, they also established a moratorium. The Health committee told them they needed to negotiate and sign the bill. This was a golden opportunity to give them surgery.

Kansas

- Doing poorly on membership.
- The independent Optometry board reports to the governor of Kansas. A few years ago, the optometrists wanted meds, and got what they asked for.
- Kansas society has a new president and is experiencing problems with members who do not want to say anything, for fear of losing their referring optometrists.
- Dr. Albanis helped get Kansas moving at last year's retreat.
- Kansas is coming out of its doldrums with significant help from Dr. Clifford. After a meeting in San Antonio with 16 doctors, Kansas increased its board from 5-10.
- Kansas has boots on ground in Topeka with the county commissioner.
- PAC director left. Their Secretary is bringing on new people to help manage a succession plan. Rich Paul's plate is understandably filled with Illinois's scope issues.
 - **Comment:** Missouri said they had similar leadership issues before they switched executive directors years ago. What made a huge difference was the director being local, helps build local relationships.
- Senator, Jim Denning, former practice manager in Kansas and Missouri, offered his office on Labor Day, where Dr. Clifford filmed a video. A week Later at a meeting in Hutchinson, the executive director was approached about optometry doing lid and some injection legislation. Told Senator Denning who firmly declined.

Nebraska

- Like many smaller states, most have trouble keeping people involved.
- We do not have a set number of executive board members, people come and go.
- For 15 years or more Nebraska has enjoyed good executive directors, excluding the last couple of years. They will soon have the opportunity to do things differently, as their current executive director is leaving in the Fall.
- Met with the Nebraska University's new chair of ophthalmology who is very open to working with us. Previous chairs have not been that supportive. Extremely important to have University support. Had a very good discussion with the Chair and one of the faculty members who also expressed an interest in Nebraska's executive board.
- Since 2009 Nebraska has been fighting a scope bill in committee. Optometry has been surprisingly half-hearted about the bill. They typically pack the room with people in support of the bill. This year they only had a couple of people. Not sure their strategy?
- Nebraska survived the head of the health committee, who terms out this year - she was their arch nemesis.

Missouri

- Missouri is struggling with new leadership. Drs. Sun and Shields are helping to build the new leadership.
- Enjoy strong relationships with St Louis optometry.
- Fairly active optometry group was planning to reach out to the society to support a tele-health bill. The society opposed it. Optometry said it will be reintroduced again this year.
- September's joint meeting with Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas was well attended.
- Conversing with legislators about introducing a proactive bill banning sclera tattooing.
- Have a very strong executive director and had a very successful Advocacy day.
- Enjoy strong relationships with legislators.
- Membership numbers are good, but the number of active members is low.
- Society members financially donate, but do not show up to fight the good fight for fear of losing optometric referrals. Both financial support and showing up are key.
- Last year started an eye-catching newsletter to summarize what goes on in the state.
 - **Question:** Can we send a newsletter update from the heartland? If members feel like their cohorts in other states are active, they may be inspired to take action.
 - **Comment:** Kansas Senator Denning who has 20 ophthalmologists, said "You just have to poke the bear enough."
 - **Questions:** Can we capitalize on turning the cataract loss from a negative into a positive? Does the AAO have any verbiage to use?

Iowa

- Iowa has another scope battle. The state senator is an ophthalmologist and was helpful in defeating legislation. The senate majority leader feels it will be back in 2020.
- Iowa board discussed whether to mitigate the bill by coming up with a compromise knowing the bill is coming up? Board said "no compromise, surgery by surgeons only."
- Iowa President elect of the Iowa academy, Justin Bloomberg, optometrist, turned ophthalmologist, is firm on surgery by surgeons, not giving up anything.
- Part of our Member benefit is offering a coding seminar helpful, only to members.
- Iowa is planning a one-on-one phone call campaign, splitting up names to call and recruit non-members, with follow-up emails.
- Focus on fighting upcoming legislative scope battles and building our membership.
- Iowa is also frustrated that society members financially donate, but do not show up.
- Missouri provided Iowa useful ideas about how to recruit society membership.

Discussion about the recent AAO letter from Dr. Parke sent to all counselors:

- Reaction to the letter created a chain of emails that included misinformation, false statements that was misinterpreted.
- Dr Parke commented that the letter was perceived as non-transparent. This was not the Academy's intent.
- Societies would like to resend Dr. Parke's letter with a few bullet points for clarity.
- John Peters, MD will ask AAO communications to provide clarifying text/bullet points.

Meeting Adjourned

COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
Sunday October 13, 2019

Region: Metro East

Chair: Dorothy Moore, MD, Delaware Academy of Ophthalmology

Staff: Brendan Marr

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

- Dorothy Moore, MD: Councilor, Delaware Academy of Ophthalmology; OPHTHPAC Committee Member.
- David Silbert, MD: Councilor, Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology
- Bob Bergran, M.D.: Councilor, Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology
- Sharon Taylor, M.D.: Councilor, Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology
- Amjad Hammad, M.D.: President and Councilor and President, New York State Ophthalmological Society
- Martin Lederman, M.D.: Councilor, New York State Ophthalmological Society
- Gareth Lema, M.D., PhD: Councilor, New York State Ophthalmology Society
- Grace Sun, M.D., Councilor, New York State Ophthalmological Society
- Cecily Lesko, M.D., FACS: Councilor, New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology

Guests and Staff

- Jeffrey Henderer, M.D., Board of Trustees
- Ruth Williams, M.D., Board of Trustees
- Keith Carter, M.D.; Board of Trustees
- Denise Alber, M.D: Regional Representative, Secretariat for State Affairs
- Kenneth Cheng, M.D. Chairman, Surgical Scope Fund
- Michelle Rhee, OPHTHPAC Committee
- Don Cinotti, M.D.: New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology
- Ralph Lanciano, M.D., New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology
- Matt Halpin: Executive Director, New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology

II. Academy Updates/Requests for Information

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update – *Denise Alber, MD*

- The 2019 Surgery by Surgeons campaign has netted safe surgery **victories** in 9 states so far in 2019
- Three states are still facing active optometric surgery initiatives (Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, and South Dakota)
- Ophthalmology faced a bitter loss in Arkansas after a hard-fought battle for patient safety
- Large states like California, Florida, and Illinois remain on the “watch list” for optometric surgery initiatives.
- It is critical that all ophthalmologists and state societies contribute to the Surgical Scope Fund (SSF)
- The State Affairs Secretariat suggests Academy members find five colleagues who have never given to SSF and ask them each to donate \$500.



B. OPHTHPAC Update – *Michelle Rhee, M.D.*

- Donations to OPHTHPAC can be made by texting “MD Eye” to 41444
- To date, OPHTHPAC has raised 22% of its goal for the 2019-2020 election cycle.
- OPHTHPAC’s goal is to get pro-medicine, and specifically pro-ophthalmology candidates elected to Congress.
- OPHTHPAC gives ophthalmology a voice on Capitol Hill.
- Current federal advocacy initiatives include:
 - Protecting fair Medicare reimbursements
 - Preventing ill-conceived programs from controlling Part B drug costs
 - Maintaining access to compound treatments
 - Fighting new federal requirements in the Contact Lens Rule
- All ophthalmologists are urged to raise money for both OPHTHPAC and Surgical Scope Fund.
- OPHTHPAC has 2 components:
 - PAC component is money that goes directly to candidate for Congress
 - Administrative Fund: money that goes to funding the PACs overhead costs
- 77% of the Council has given to OPHTHPAC to date for the current cycle

III. Review of Roundtable Discussion

New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology:

- Big win against mandatory children’s exam legislation brought forth by organized optometry
- The legislation passed unanimously by both chambers of the legislature, but was vetoed by the Governor.
- Unlikely that the legislature will override the Governor’s veto

Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology:

- Optometry continues their push for expanded scope to include surgery, but the bill will not go anywhere this year
- A “definition of surgery” bill was also introduced, but will not advance this year.
- Children’s vision legislation has been introduced in the legislature
 - The House introduced children’s vision “screening” legislation, supported by ophthalmology
 - The Senate introduced mandatory children’s comprehensive exam legislation, supported by optometry, opposed by ophthalmology
 - Neither bill is expected to go anywhere this session.

Delaware Academy of Ophthalmology:

- Not much to report legislatively
- Optometry has changed lobbyists
- Biggest issue for optometrists is the online refraction issue

New York State Ophthalmological Society:

- The legislature is out of session for the year
- Ophthalmology succeeded in blocking legislation to allow optometrists to prescribe oral medication, though it’s likely to be re-introduced again next year
- The society is looking at new strategies to raise at least \$55,000 for their PAC

IV. Close

AAO2AAO Roundtable Discussion:

- After much discussion regarding AAO2AAO, all councilors from the region reached unanimous agreement on the following:
 - By a show of hands, all councilors were opposed to extending any type of Academy membership or affiliation to optometrists
 - By a show of hands, all Councilors agreed that neither the Annual Meeting nor any other official Academy events were not the proper venue for providing additional training for optometrists, and that it should not be the role of the Academy to provide such training.
 - By a show of hands all councilors agreed that the issue of ophthalmology providing additional training for optometrists should take place at the state level, but that decision should ultimately be made by each individual state society.



COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019

Region: Mid-Atlantic

Chair: Edgar C. Gamponia, MD

Staff: Lisa Pinkston

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

- Renee Bovellet, MD, Councilor, Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Edgar C. Gamponia, MD, Councilor, West Virginia Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Leslie S. Jones, MD, Councilor, Washington DC Metropolitan Ophthalmological Society
- Lee A. Snyder, MD, Councilor, Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Woodford Van Meter, MD, Alternate Councilor, Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Alan L. Wagner, MD FACS, Councilor, Virginia Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

Guests and Staff

- Chris Albanis, MD, Associate Secretary for State Affairs, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Frank R. Burns, MD, President, Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Jeremy D. Clark, MD, Academy Leadership Development Program Participant, XXI, Class of 2019 (representing Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons)
- Kim E. Ebert, Executive Director, West Virginia Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- David B. Glasser, MD, Secretary for Federal Affairs, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Sanjay D. Goel, MD, Trustee-at-Large, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Rajiv Luthra, MD MPH, President, Washington DC Metropolitan Ophthalmological Society
- Stephanie J. Marioneaux, MD, Member, OPHTHPAC Committee, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Elizabeth G. Roach, Executive Director, Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

II. Academy Updates/Requests for Information

- A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update – Chris Albanis, MD
- 2019 was an interesting year in state advocacy and we anticipate that 2020 will be similar with more than 20 states identified as potential OD surgery threats.
 - Optometry has a playbook, that includes a model surgery bill that includes an “exclusionary” list of 11-18 procedures; everything not identified as excluded is fair game.
 - The 2019 wins and losses concerning state optometric scope were reviewed, including Maryland’s success in getting surgery defined and surgical authority removed from a bill before it was signed by the governor.
 - IL, CA and FL remain on a ‘watch’ list for possible optometric surgery initiatives.
 - All societies need to focus on building relationships.

- Surgical Scope Fund: Donations at AAO 2019 are down. Encourage your colleagues to give to this critically important fund, and tell them why you give We are pushing for large donations (\$500+)
 - *Question:* Has the AAO2AAO issue negatively impacted contributions?
 - *Answer:* We have heard some comments in that regard, but we don't have enough information to draw a conclusion. In the meantime, we hope to discuss the issue with any potential contributor. "Surgery by Surgeons" is critical, and the Academy and state societies remain committed to protecting patient safety and maintaining high surgical standards.
 - While Surgical Scope Fund contributions are not tax-deductible, they are also not reportable. You should also consider the value of the time you take out of office to testify, meet with legislators, etc.: substantial donations keep us in our offices.
- The Leadership Development Program (LDP) continues to help prepare future leaders of our societies, such as Jeremy Clark, MD, a graduate of LDP XXI, class of 2019. The LDP XXII, class of 2020 launched its participation in this program during AAO 2019, and nominations for the next class (XXIII-2021) will open in March 2020.

B. OPHTHPAC Update – Stephanie J. Marioneaux, MD

- Academy continues to pursue dialogue with policymakers/legislators to halt implementation of the cataract pay cut.
- OPHTHPAC fundraising goal:
 - Only 70% of Councilors have invested thus far this cycle.
 - Overall donations to OPHTHPAC are down, with 22% of goal reached.
 - Mobile Cause offers an easy way to give via text message. Dr. Marioneaux distributed a card to regional meeting attendees, with information on how to give via text. Staff are also taking donations outside the General Session room.
- We are always looking for physician-friendly candidates to run for Congress
 - Our colleague, Bill Clifford, MD, Academy Board member and former Councilor, is running for KS, 1st congressional district
 - We were successful in electing a urologist, Rep. Murphy, in NC
- Thank those of you who are serving as Congressional Advocates and helping to ensure a pro-ophthalmology message reaches Capitol Hill. If anyone is interested in being paired with their member of Congress as a Congressional Advocate, please let us know.
- Join us for Congressional Advocacy Day 2020 in Washington, DC, and encourage your colleagues to do the same. Congressional Advocacy Day is the start of Mid-Year Forum 2020 (April 22-25).

III. Key Society Highlights

Kentucky Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (KAEPS)

- Kentucky is electing a new governor this year. KAEPS has hosted small events for both candidates, at which members delivered individual and state eye PAC contributions and discussed policy priorities.
- During the 2019 session, KAEPS supported SB 54 concerning prior authorization, which was successfully passed and signed into law.

Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (MSEPS)

- The society held a successful Annual Meeting in May 2019, that included scientific sessions for ophthalmologists as well as programming for technicians and a Codequest session for administrators.

- Dr. Sanjay Goel (AAO Trustee-at-Large) addressed MSEPS member questions about AAO2AAO during the society's Fall business meeting.
- MSEPS is currently focusing on membership development, rebuilding the state eye PAC, and promoting member support for the Surgical Scope Fund.

Virginia Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (VSEPS)

- 2019 is a big election year for VSEPS because all seats in the Virginia General Assembly are on the November 2019 ballot. If control of either chamber flips, VSEPS expects a shift in policy. State eye PAC is giving aggressively and strategically.
- The Virginia board of optometry's TPA formulary committee voted 5-2 to allow ODs to prescribe gabapentin, a schedule V drug, over the objections of the two ophthalmologists on the committee.
- While bills concerning surprise/balance billing and Certificate of Public Need were not successful, VSEPS continues to work to address these issues.
- VSEPS has established a Patient Advocacy Committee that will be getting some traction

Washington DC Metropolitan Ophthalmological Society (WDCMOS)

- Society holds quarterly meetings rather than an annual meeting.
- Many WDCMOS members live in Virginia or Maryland, so also participate in those organizations.
- WDCMOS wants to propose cross-membership with DC/MD/VA societies. Maryland and Virginia Councilors were receptive to this idea, so WDCMOS will discuss it more fully with leaders of those organizations.
- The society collaborates with several local institutions, such as Prevent Blindness, and supports local vision screenings.

West Virginia Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (WVAEPS)

- WVAEPS has been focusing on building relationships: it has identified key champions in both the WV Senate and House, and has a close relationship with the state medical association
- While optometric advocacy efforts have been quiet in WV, they are aware that the situation can change at any time.
- The society is considering introducing proactive legislation on scleral tattooing.

IV. Close

- Mid-Atlantic Councilors and guests continued discussion concerning the AAO2AAO presentation made during the Council's opening session. No conclusions were reached, nor action taken.



**COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2019**

Region: Mountain West

Chair: Rebecca Braverman, MD

Staff: Sarah Cartagena

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

Craig Wilkerson, MD, Montana Academy of Ophthalmology
James Earl, MD, Idaho Society of Ophthalmology
David Smits, MD, Wyoming Ophthalmological Society
James Howard, MD, Utah Ophthalmology Society

Guests and Staff

- Sarah Cartagena, Academy staff
- Angela Watkins, President, Montana Academy of Ophthalmology
- Nanette Gilbertson, Executive Director, Montana Academy of Ophthalmology
- Chet Seward, Colorado Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
- Jordana Smith, President, Arizona Ophthalmological Society
- Sara Olson, Executive Director, Idaho Society of Ophthalmology
- Nathan Welch, President Elect, Idaho Society of Ophthalmology
- Leo Seibold, Past President, Colorado Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
- Anne Miller, President, Wyoming Ophthalmological Society
- Sheila Bush, Staff, Wyoming Ophthalmological Society.
- Brian Stagg, Incoming Councilor, Utah Ophthalmology Society
- Lloyd Williams, LDP, Utah Ophthalmology Society
- Annette Mahler, Executive Director, Utah Ophthalmology Society
- Kurt Heitman, Secretary for State Affairs

II. ACADEMY UPDATES/REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update - *Kurt Heitman, MD*

- Loss in Arkansas shows how important every state pays attention to their relationships with state lawmakers, the state was able to raise \$700,000 from their state members to recall the legislation.
- State Affairs currently has an archive/library that can be utilized as a resource for state advocacy efforts.
- A new dashboard has been created to show how each state society is performing compared to other state societies.

B. OPHTHPAC Update - *David Johnson, MD*

- Goal is to raise 2 million each year, currently only at 20%.
- Mobile cause is an instant way to donate funds and costs less than other fundraising options.
- Encourage members to give until it hurts.

III. REVIEW OF ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Idaho Society of Ophthalmology

- The Idaho Society of Ophthalmology is currently fighting a scope battle. They are utilizing a lobbyist from the Idaho Medical Association and are considering hiring their own lobbyist. This would be very costly, however. There was discussion on how long a contract should be conducted with a lobbyist.
- The society is attempting to make payment/dues easier than personal checks for their members and is utilizing Snowball rather than MobileCause. Snowball is recommended for smaller organizations as it is only \$500 per year.

Montana Academy of Ophthalmology

- Fairly quiet scope wise. Leadership is fairly engaged and have developed an advocacy plan.
- There is great focus on growing member engagement and getting involved in advocacy. Attempting to get into social media, scheduling and planning social media posts to utilize as an advocacy tool. There is ongoing encouragement to get members to participate in the LDP program as well.

Utah Ophthalmology Society

- There is currently an optometry legislation that the society is figuring out how to react and respond appropriately.
- A thought bubble of the Academy offering financial services to ophthalmologists was also discussed.

Wyoming Ophthalmological Society

- Projecting another scope bill coming through. The society is thinking about action items to help fight the bill. Assessing licensing and thinking of putting them under an umbrella. Three optometrists currently sit on the board who will oversee this.

Arizona Ophthalmological Society

- Had legislations that legislators brought both ophthalmologists and optometrists on board. Expecting a scope battle in the near future.
- Experiencing an issue on sunrise, optometrists attempted to remove the sunrise process by gathering allied health professionals to support this. The society hired a lobbyist to assist with this battle.

Colorado Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

- No scope battles.
- Continuing to follow strategic plan.

IV. CLOSE

Meeting adjourned by 3:15 pm.



COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
Sunday, October 13, 2019

Region: New England

Chair: Linda A. Schumacher-Feero, MD

Staff: Mara Pearse Burke

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

- Linda A. Schumacher-Feero, MD, Councilor, Maine Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Nancy D. Efferson-Bonachea, Councilor, New Hampshire Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
- David R. Rivera, MD, Councilor, Rhode Island Society of Eye Physicians
- Amy Gregory, Councilor, Vermont Ophthalmological Society
- Jeffrey D. Young, MD, Councilor, Vermont Ophthalmological Society
- John Mandeville, MD, PhD, Councilor, Massachusetts Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Michael H. Goldstein, MD, Councilor, Massachusetts Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons
- Edward S. Lim, MD, Councilor, Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians and State Affairs Representative

Guests and Staff

- Shirley Goggin, Executive Director, Maine Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Daniel J. Briceland, MD, AAO Senior Secretary for Advocacy
- Stephen Thornquist, MD, AAO State Affairs Representative, Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians
- Debbie Osborn, Executive Director, Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Lynn K. Gordon, MD, PhD, Chair, Council of American Academy of Ophthalmology
- David Emmel MD, Legislative Chair, Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians
- Jason M. Gilbert, MD, Past-President, Massachusetts Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

II. ACADEMY UPDATES/REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update – Edward S. Lim, MD

- All AAO members, and especially all Councilors, are encouraged to contribute to Surgical Scope Fund.
- Over 20 states are identified as “THREATENED” for the 2020 legislative season. Contributing is important even when your state is not imperiled.
- Really important to spread the message that the current 15% fee cuts were actually slated to be **30% cuts** until the Academy got involved and negotiated to bring the percentage down.

- Across the nation in 2019, ODs are using a bill-model similar to that seen in Louisiana, Kentucky and Oklahoma which includes an “exclusionary” list of 18 procedures – any surgery not listed would be within OD’s scope.
- Beware of any draft legislation containing key words and phrases such as “procedures” rather than “surgery”, “exclusions” as noted earlier, and “invasive procedures”.
- The current “Watch List” continues with California, Florida, and Illinois.
- A big loss was suffered in 2019 in Arkansas with the passing of an all-encompassing surgery bill.
- The State Society “Dashboard” is, among other things, a tool to help state society members developing talking points for legislative visits and testimony.
- Leadership Development Program (LDP) is going strong; solicitation for nominees for the class of 2021 will be sent in March 2020.
- The Academy IRIS Registry has 200 million visits at last count!

B. OPHTHPAC Update – Linda A. Schumacher – Feero, MD

- 77% of Council members have donated to OPHTHPAC this calendar year.
- Current Advocacy areas of focus include: 1) regulatory relief from prior authorization requirements, 2) evolving Medicare’s physician payment systems, 3) protecting fair reimbursements, 4) protecting global surgical payments, 5) controlling part-B drug costs, 6) continuing access to compounded treatments, 7) keeping ASC s sustainable, 8) fighting administrative burdens in the Contact Lens Rule, and 9) securing funding for federal vision research.
- The Academy needs the financial means to establish and maintain strong relationships in Congress to help the above efforts. The AAO strives to connect all members of Congress with a politically-engaged AAO member.
- Academy member support is key as it allows ophthalmology to be the *predominant eye care voice* in the halls of Congress.
- Spread the word about how easy it is to donate by texting “MDEYE” to 41444.

III. REVIEW OF SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTS SUBMITTED BY COUNCILORS

Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians

- The society was active in legislative matters throughout the spring and summer.
- Developed public service/education video detailing the extensive training and expertise of ophthalmologists. There is no demeaning content regarding optometrists, no reference to scope of practice – just an all-around positive message. The society is very willing to share their presentation with other state societies who can use or adapt it for their own needs.
- 90% of state society members do not want an AAO to AAOptometry initiative.
- State society members are tired of battles. They would rather work proactively with ODs to find common ground, for example on insurance issues like capping reimbursement rates for non-covered services, IOL fees, plus issues related to glasses and contacts.

Maine Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

- MSEPS faced no scope of practice threats or other legislation of unique interest to ophthalmology during the 2019 session but does expect one during the Second Session beginning in January 2020 (which is supposed to be limited to hold-over and emergency bills) or in 2021.

- Reporting on an optometric bill involving OD's gaining privileges for chalazions and possibly YAG capsulotomies, but the just published list of bill titles to be addressed in 2020 does not appear to include an optometric scope challenge. The wording of the bills has not been made public yet and will be reviewed to be sure there isn't a scope expansion hidden inside another bill.
- Maine optometrists held 2-day meeting on use of lasers and ophthalmic surgeries, including wet labs, taught by optometrists from Oklahoma.
- Linda Schumacher-Feero, M.D. was appointed to the Medical Advisory Board by the Secretary of State to assist in determining vision standards for motor vehicle operator licensing.

Massachusetts Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

- Current legislative activities:
 - opposing legislation which would have allowed optometrists to prescribe all oral medications for diagnosis/treatment of ocular diseases and would have allowed for "non-invasive surgery"
 - opposing optometric scope expansion bills
- 90% of state legislators are "against ophthalmology" and are tired of scope battles.
- MSEPS is ramping up its social media presence and offering a 2-part media training workshop for members.

New Hampshire Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

- State society members' limited energy has turned to apathy; they are worn out. Society was unable to rally anyone to act as Congressional Advocates for newly elected legislators; however, these relationships remains a priority and the Councilor will continue with efforts to engage the community.
- Society surveyed members for their current concerns; results indicated significant concerns about insurance coverage and limitations.
- Society collaborated with optometrists on prescription and contact lens legislation.

Rhode Island Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons

- No current legislative or scope of practice issues.
- Optometrists are currently fighting against bills being brought forth by technicians.

Vermont Ophthalmological Society

- The Office of Professional Regulations is determining education differences between ophthalmologists and optometrists.
- Qualified victory in legislature when preferred language was stripped from a bill and the promise to undertake a study on the same topic was inserted instead.

IV. DISCUSSION /IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE CARS FOR APRIL 2020 COUNCIL MEETING

- NONE NOTED

V. New / Other Business

- The AAO to AAOptometry issue is of serious concern to state society members. There appears to be general lack of understanding of the details and of the

Academy's intent. This should be handled carefully with a strong PR campaign to educate all AAO members.

- Share with other state societies the video developed by the **Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians** that details the extensive training of and highlights the expertise of ophthalmologists *without negative language about optometry*. This can be use with legislators, in the ophthalmologist's office and as a public service announcement.
- Encourage neighboring states to support each other within the region. For example: ophthalmologists not practicing in Maine but licensed in Maine, can assist in legislative battles. All should share financial resources, strategies and ideas when one state is under fire, as several of the New England states currently are.



COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
Sunday, October 13, 2019

Region: Pacific Coast

Chair: David Zumbro, MD, Alaska Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

Staff: Scott Haber

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

- Leah Levi, MD, California Academy of Eye Physicians & Surgeons,
- Troy Elander, MD, California Academy of Eye Physicians & Surgeons,
- Rhoads Stevens, MD, Hawaii Ophthalmology Society- State Councilor
- Michael D. Westafer, MD, Nevada Ophthalmology Society
- Michael Brush, MD, Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Aaron Weingeist, MD, Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- V. Nicholas Batra, MD, California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons,
- Amin Ashrafzadeh, MD, California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Nisha Nagarkatti-Gude, MD, Oregon Academy of Ophthalmology

Guests and Staff

- Niraj Patel, MD, Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, OPHTHPAC Committee
- Craig Kliger, MD, California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Anne Coleman, MD, American Academy of Ophthalmology President-Elect
- Rebecca Dave, MD, Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Kimberly Conn, Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Janet Chieh, Washington Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Rahul Khurana, California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, President
- Stephen McLeod, California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, AAO BOT
- Frank Scotti, California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons, OPHTHPAC
- Jessica Nichols, Hawaii Ophthalmology Society, Executive Director

II. ACADEMY UPDATES/REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update - *V. Nicholas Batra, MD*

- Very active and successful year for scope of practice battles at the state level
- Victories secured in Alabama, Iowa, Nebraska, etc
- In many states, there remains pending OD legislation.
- Surgical scope fund continues to be successful and members were urged to give their support to surgical scope fund if they had yet to do so.

B. OPHTHPAC Update - *Niraj Patel, MD- Washington*

- Successful year for OPHTHPAC and commitment from members helped success on a variety of issues.

- Continue to work on building relationships with key members in the House and Senate but need additional support from members
- Session attendees were urged to continue to support OPHTHPAC, as commitment enables Academy advocacy efforts to continue to be successful.
- Dr. Patel highlighted OPHTHPAC's mobile cause effort and reiterated need for 100% participation by councilors.

III. KEY SOCIETY HIGHLIGHTS

- California

California is quiet on the legislative front and so limited state advocacy agenda. Had a successful state society event at Annual Meeting, as they look to add new members. The event was a success. Discussion of impact on Avastin reimbursement, with Dr. Kliger discussing achievements specific to getting increased reimbursement. The reimbursement remains too low and members question whether something could be achieved through raising reimbursement closer to that for other anti-vegf drugs. Specific discussion of a CMS Avastin demonstration.

- Alaska

Dr. Zumbro said that Alaska's legislature is focused on the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend and that political issue has pushed aside any other legislation or priorities. There is a YAG issue and they remain hopeful on Truth-in-Advertising legislation. Alaska state society is also looking for increased advocacy activity amongst its members.

- Washington

Councilor stated that it was relatively quiet in Washington but they were watching activity around a potential scope bill. The major issue is the lack of low vision service providers, as low vision services are non-existent in the state right now. This was mentioned as a potential collaboration point with optometry. Members brought up concerns around reimbursement with cataract cut, which included extensive discussion about specific declines in physician reimbursement and remedies. Dr. Stevens mentioned that this issue was a ticking time bomb due to manpower problems on the horizon. Members highlighted that to combat the cuts, there needed to be a focus on being entrepreneurial. Members then discussed the potential pitfall of that, specifically premium cataract surgery only practices which are popping up. Another topic of discussion was how to expand the "physician reimbursement pie" and members discussed costs associated with drugs, ancillary tests, and ASC's.

- Nevada

- In Nevada, there was no major legislative activity but continuing to monitor.

- Oregon

Nothing of note with respect to optometric legislation but there have been efforts around regulation of telemedicine and that is something we have been engaged in. Discussion of broader efforts in other states, including Washington, around telemedicine and optometry.

- Hawaii

No legislative activity to report in Hawaii. They now have a full-time lobbyist at state level that keeps them informed. They held their state society Annual Meeting, which this year included inviting broader family of members. There was an organized recital for children and other successes. The meeting was a success and it was highlighted that their membership is roughly 90% of the state ophthalmologists.

IV. New/Other Business

Dr. Zumbro asked attendees if they had any new business but none was shared. He thanked everyone for their participation in this meeting. The meeting was adjourned.



COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS SUNDAY, OCT. 13, 2019

Region: Southeastern

Chair: Todd D Gwin MD

Staff: Michael Levitt

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

- Stephen J Kelly, MD, Councilor, Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology
- David B Cano, MD, Councilor, Florida Society of Ophthalmology
- Mark Michels, MD FACS, Councilor, Florida Society of Ophthalmology
- Adam M Katz, MD, Councilor, Florida Society of Ophthalmology
- Jeremy K Jones, MD, Alternate Councilor, Georgia Society of Ophthalmology
- Sara E Stoneburner, MD, Councilor, North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Cristina Ferrari Lugo, MD, Councilor, Puerto Rican Society of Ophthalmology
- Todd D Gwin, MD, Councilor, South Carolina Society of Ophthalmology
- Mark D Ewald, MD, Councilor, Tennessee Academy of Ophthalmology

Guests and Staff

- Bret Crumpton, MD, President-Elect, Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology
- Kitty Gordon, President, North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Susan Burden, Past President, North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Bob Park, MD, President-Elect, North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Jennifer Jordan, MD, Leadership Development Program, North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Darby Miller, MD, President, Florida Society of Ophthalmology
- Janet Betchkal, MD, OPHTHPAC, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Wonsuck Kim, MD, Secretariat for State Affairs, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Trey Bishop, MD Secretariat for State Affairs, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Dianna Seldomridge, MD, Council of Secretaries, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Cindie Mattox, MD, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Aaron Miller, MD, Council of Secretaries, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Maria Aaron, MD, Board of Trustees, American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Christine Lenihan, Executive Director, Tennessee Academy of Ophthalmology
- Jacqueline Del Valle, Executive Director, Puerto Rico Society of Ophthalmology
- Alan Skipper, Executive Director, North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

II. ACADEMY UPDATES/REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update – *Trey Bishop, MD*

- The two key messages from state affairs are to encourage Surgical Scope Fund support and to encourage state societies to develop state society organization.
- Focus on Young ophthalmologists to play future leadership roles and to build advocacy effectiveness.

- Ophthalmology won 16 optometric scope of practice battles this year.
- Ophthalmology lost a surgery battle in Arkansas.
- SSF contributions are confidential.
- It has been a record year for SSF contributions.
- 25 scope of practice battles are expected next year.
- 79% of the Council are participants in Surgical Scope Fund.
- For additional details, refer to report in agenda book.

B. OPHTHPAC Update – Janet Betchkal, MD

- A CMS moratorium on pay increases is being fought.
- But for efforts by the Academy, the 15% cataract fee cut could have been far worst.
- The Academy is lobbying hard on surprise billing and compounding issues.
- Only 77% of Councilors have contributed to OPHTHPAC.
- Fear of optometrists is not an impediment to an OPHTHPAC contribution.
- 1/3 of all members of Congress do not have a key contact.
- Attendees were encouraged to make known their own relationships with legislators.
- It was announced that Bill Clifford from Kansas is running for Congress.
- For additional details, refer to report in agenda book.

III. KEY SOCIETY HIGHLIGHTS

Florida Society of Ophthalmology

- The society was able to avoid a scope battle due to relationships with key legislators.
- The society lets legislators know about their community contributions through its charitable foundation.
- The society authored an amblyopia awareness resolution
- The society did an amblyopia screening, working with local museums, free clinics, and zoos.
- The society was highly involved with issues before the Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee (CAC).
- The society is anticipating a strong annual meeting and encouraged others to attend.
- The society is working with to increase membership, especially among young ophthalmologists.

North Carolina Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

- Proactive fundraising efforts is the secret sauce to effective advocacy.
- Hosting fundraisers was especially effective.
- Legislators are appreciative of efforts to get people to your fundraiser.
- Bundling dollars has a multiplier effect for building relationships with legislators.

Puerto Rico Society of Ophthalmology

- An optometric scope expansion bill is not moving due to the relationships the society has built.
- The society celebrated its 50th Anniversary.
- The society is working with other medical society to enact legislation to require Medicare Advantage plans to follow federal guidelines, such as including recent graduates in networks.

Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology

- Targeted, local efforts to build key relationship with legislators were essential to turning the tide on optometry's scope of practice expansion bill.

Georgia Society of Ophthalmology

- The society supported step therapy waivers to increase access to care.
- The society carefully monitored interstate licensure compact legislation.
- The society is building its strength with young ophthalmologists through a leadership enhancement program.
- The society is building an advocacy rainy day fund.
- A rainy fund should be a best practice for all societies.

Tennessee Academy of Ophthalmology

- The society experienced a calm before the storm on scope expansion legislation.
- The introduction of optometric laser surgery legislation is highly probable in 2020 or 2021.
- The society is focusing on building relationships with legislators at tactical choke points.
- The society increased the size of its board to strengthen its organizational efforts.
- There is a second optometry school being built in the eastern part of the state that will include a surgery suite.

South Carolina Society of Ophthalmology

- The society is assigning ophthalmologists to key legislators to bolster its key contact system before January.
- Young ophthalmologists are being used in this key contact effort.
- The society built its relationships with other specialties by supporting anesthesiologists against CNRAs, who are seeking independent practice.
- The society's legislative relationships and fundraising efforts derailed the CNRA's scope expansion bill.

IV. CLOSE

AAO2AAO:

- The Southeast region recognizes Academy's efforts.
- A substantial Truth in Advertising campaign needs to part of an AAO2AAO package.
- Delineation between the professions must occur before significant AAO2AAO integration.
- A rollback of designating optometrists as physicians for the purpose of Medicare was raised as a possible first step.
- It was voiced that there was no need to partner with optometry.
- It was voiced that a membership track for optometry is the wrong approach

COUNCIL REGIONAL MEETINGS
Sunday October 13, 2019

Region: Tornado Belt

Chair: Robert Gross, MD, Texas Academy of Ophthalmology

Staff: Bob Palmer

I. Welcome

Councilors and Alternate Councilors

- Robert Gross, MD Councilor, Texas Ophthalmological Society
- Tommy Mosely, MD - Councilor, Arkansas Ophthalmological Society
- Jean Huasheer, MD - Alt. Councilor, Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology
- Maria Reihoso, MD - Alt. Councilor, Louisiana Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Kimberly Crowder, MD - Alt. Councilor, Mississippi Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Chevy Lee, MD - Councilor, Texas Ophthalmological Society
- Sidney Gicheru, MD - State Affairs Secretariat; Alternate Councilor, Texas Ophthalmological Society

Guests and Staff

- George Williams, MD - Academy President
- Greg Skuta, MD - Academy Board/Foundation
- Bill Clifford, MD Academy Board/Kansas Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
- Laura Hawkins, Arkansas Ophthalmological Society - Executive Director
- Jeff Maltzman, MD - OPHTHPAC Chair
- Laurie Barber, MD - Guest, Arkansas Ophthalmological Society
- David Shulman, MD - Guest, Texas Ophthalmological Society
- Rachael Reed, Executive Director, Texas Ophthalmological Society
- George Ellis, MD, - Guest, Louisiana Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons

II. Academy Updates/Requests for Information

A. Secretariat for State Affairs Update - *Sidney Gicheru, MD*

- The 2019 Surgery by Surgeons campaign has netted safe surgery **victories** in 9 states so far in 2019
- Three states are still facing active optometric surgery initiatives (Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, and South Dakota)
- Ophthalmology faced a bitter loss in Arkansas after a hard-fought battle for patient safety
- Large states like California, Florida, and Illinois remain on the “watch list” for optometric surgery initiatives.
- It is critical that all ophthalmologists and state societies contribute to the Surgical Scope Fund (SSF)
- The State Affairs Secretariat suggests Academy members find five colleagues who have never given to SSF and ask them each to donate \$500.

B. OPHTHPAC Update - *Michelle Rhee, M.D.*

- Donations to OPHTHPAC can be made by texting “MD Eye” to 41444
- To date, OPHTHPAC has raised 66% of this year’s goal; 22% of its goal for the two year cycle election cycle (2019-2020).

- To date OPHTHPAC has received contributions from 78% of Councilors; the goal is 100%, so if you have not contributed yet, please do so.
- OPHTHPAC's goal is to get pro-medicine, and specifically pro-ophthalmology candidates elected to Congress. For example:
 - OPHTHPAC supported the candidacy of Greg Murphy, MD. Dr. Murphy is an urologist who was victorious in the NC 3rd District Congressional recent election.
 - OPHTHPAC has contributed to 2020 Bill Clifford, MD for Congress (Kansas 1st Congressional District). Dr. Clifford is an ophthalmologist many members who member know. He has been a very active member in the KS State society and the Council. Please contribute running for the 1st Congressional seat in Kansas (ophthalmologist) for Congress. to his campaign.
 - Many members know.
- OPHTHPAC gives ophthalmology a voice on Capitol Hill.
- Current federal advocacy initiatives include:
 - Protecting fair Medicare reimbursements
 - Preventing ill-conceived programs from controlling Part B drug costs
 - Maintaining access to compound treatments
 - Fighting new federal requirements in the Contact Lens Rule
- All ophthalmologists are urged to raise money for both OPHTHPAC and Surgical Scope Fund.
- OPHTHPAC has 2 components:
 - PAC component is money that goes directly to candidate for Congress
 - Administrative Fund: money that goes to funding the PACs overhead costs
- 77% of the Council has given to OPHTHPAC to date for the current cycle

III. Review of Roundtable Discussion

Arkansas Ophthalmological Society:

- AOS had an aggressive advocacy campaign – member direct engagement; TV, radio, print, and social, constituent letters to derail an OD surgery bill. However, in the end, the state legislature passed the OD surgery bill.
- However, the AOS members were not going to let this legislative action go uncontested. The society and its members launched a citizen referendum campaign that if successful would nullify the OD surgery bill passed by the state legislature.
- Succeeded in gathering and submitting approximately 88,000 citizen signatures. 54,000 were necessary to qualify. However, Secretary of State ruled citing a technical signature gathering procedure that the AOS referendum did not qualify for the 2020 ballot. The AOS then filed an objection of the Secretary of State's ruling with the Arkansas Supreme Court. As of this date, the Court has not completed its review of the AOS objection.
- AOS battle has resulted in an increase of society membership

Louisiana Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons:

- Society is now in the membership building mode.
- Have hired an Exec. Director.
- 100 Louisiana ophthalmologists now belong to LAEPS.
- Held a very successful Code Quest.
- Maria Reihoso, MD – Alt. Councilor - is a member of the Academy's 2020 Leadership Development Program

Mississippi Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons:

- Expect OD surgery bill in 2020. The Health Chair has asked the society to meet with the ODs to discuss if there is any way to work out a “compromise.”
- University of Mississippi hosted a Grand Rounds for a group of key state legislators. After event, legislators were presented contributions for the 2020 election cycle.

Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology

- Largest Society problem is lack of members and operation funds for the OAO.
- Worked with House of Medicine for Medicaid state reimbursement issue. OK now meets 96% fee of the Medicare reimbursement rate.
- Walmart battled with ODs in legislature re: eye practice in Walmart stores. Both sides reached a compromise that lets OD practice in Walmarts but as independent practitioner

Texas Ophthalmological Society

- TOA successfully battled an OD surgery bill. Successful campaign employing strong coalition work with Texas Medical Association, social media and a very strong lobby team led by Jay Propes.
- Used patient stories in the battle to point out the dangers of OD mismanagement and its patient impact. Strongest story - Charlette - was made into a video that has been used across the country to show the patient safety dangers and the negative patient impact of ODs performing surgery.
- Walmart battled with ODs in legislature re: eye practice in Walmart stores. Both sides reached a compromise

IV. Close

- AAO2AAO Roundtable Discussion:
 - Councilor discussion during this agenda component focused on the AAO2AAO.
 - Councilors were not sure of the Academy’s reasoning for initiating this project. Much discussion of not formalizing any AAO OD membership category.
 - Dr. Williams, Academy President answered many of the questions and empathized this is a process - No action has been taken, in the investigation stage. Want input from the Councilors.