

ADVOCACY ALERT

Issue 2 | Summer 2024



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Dear Colleagues,

As we transition into the hot Texas summer, our state continues to lead in legislative news. The Texas Chapter of the American College of Physicians Services (TXACPS) exemplifies our collective dedication to advancing internal medicine and tackling the complex Texas sized challenges within healthcare and the practice of internal medicine.

In this newsletter, we proudly reflect on our participation in the ACP National Leadership Day, where our members directly engaged with legislators to advocate for policies that benefit internal medicine physicians and their patients. This event underscores the importance of our involvement in legislative processes and demonstrates the significant impact we can have on healthcare policy. Additionally, we highlight our exceptional Health and Public Policy Committee, which plays a crucial role in shaping our organization's initiatives and strategies. This committee is led by its distinguished chair, whose expertise and leadership have been instrumental in driving forward our mission to improve health and public policy.

As we approach the November elections and 2025 state legislative session, I encourage you all to deepen your engagement with TXACPS. Your active involvement is crucial to our success, whether you participate in committee discussions, attend our annual meetings, or reach out to your legislative representatives. I urge you to consider joining ACP's Advocates for Internal Medicine Network. The College's success on Capitol Hill depends significantly on year-round grassroots support from over 15,000 members who volunteer as Advocates for Internal Medicine, communicating with their members of Congress on issues vital to internal medicine physicians, their patients, and medical students. AIMn is an excellent way to boost our involvement with ACP.

United, we can continue to make significant impact in healthcare and ensure our voices are heard.

Warm regards,



Drew Payne, DO FACP

President,

Texas Chapter of the American College of Physicians Services





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HEALTH & PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE

During the last quarter, our HPPC, led by Dr. Roxanne Tyroch, FACP, has maintained its profound commitment to addressing pertinent policy matters. Recognizing the rapid advancements and potential impact of AI on healthcare, the committee has proactively developed an AI task force. This specialized task force is dedicated to swiftly advising on legislation and ensuring that our organization stays ahead of the curve. The team, comprised of experts in AI, healthcare policy, and clinical practice, has already begun working closely with lobbyists and policymakers. By providing timely insights and recommendations, they aim to shape future regulations and guidelines effectively. Their invaluable efforts will undoubtedly enhance our preparedness to meet upcoming challenges, ensuring our practice remains at the forefront of innovation and patient care.

ADVOCACY SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Roxanne Tyroch

Dr. Roxanne Tyroch graduated from the University of Arizona School of Medicine in 1991. She completed her internship and residency at Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center (now Banner Health) and VAMC Phoenix, where she was appointed as chief resident before relocating to Fresno, California. There, she worked as a physician within the largest primary care group in the region at the time. In 1997, she moved to El Paso, Texas, and joined the faculty at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, where she was promoted to Associate Professor for her academic and clinical achievements. She then served as a core faculty member at William Beaumont Army Medical Center for two years. After five years with a large local hospitalist group, she founded Intellimedicine in 2014. Dr. Tyroch has been board certified since completing her residency.

Since 2014, Dr. Tyroch has been highly active in advocacy at the local, state, and national levels. She is a past president of the El Paso County Medical Society and serves as vice chair of the Lone Star Caucus of the Texas Medical Association (TMA). Additionally, she has been appointed to the TMA's Ad Hoc Committee for Private Practice. Dr. Tyroch has been a Texas Delegate to the American Medical Association (AMA) since 2014, serving on numerous reference committees for both the AMA and TMA. Texas ACP Services is excited to have the opportunity to follow her leadership as HPPC chair.

ACP Launches New Sex and Gender Health Learning Hub

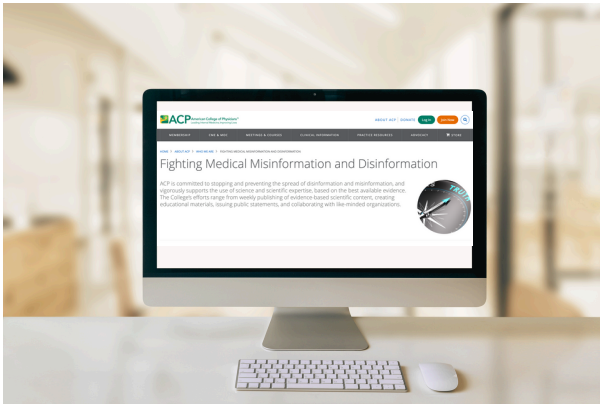
The new Sex and Gender Health Learning Hub offers member-exclusive resources for caring for patients navigating unique sexual, reproductive, and gender-related health care concerns. The Sex and Gender Health Learning Hub gives ACP members access to video recordings of key sessions from Internal Medicine Meeting 2024, including:

- **Medication Abortion in 2024: What Internal Medicine Physicians Need to Know**: Learn from experts about the current challenges to abortion access in the U.S., and best practices for serving as a resource for your patients.
- **Complete Contraceptive Toolkit: What's New in Contraception**: Pelin Batur, MD, MSCP, FACP, reviews the newest contraceptive options, compares them to older products, and discusses the rationale for choosing different agents.

The new hub also features curated articles on contraception and menopause, and the recent re-release of ACP's Human Trafficking: A Physician's Guide to Identification and Response course. CME/MOC credit are available for all activities. Visit the [Sex and Gender Health Learning Hub](#) to learn more about its resources.



TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO FIGHT MEDICAL MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION



Be sure to visit www.acponline.org/misinformation for tools and resources to help fight medical misinformation and disinformation.

Resources address a variety of issues including:

- Communicating accurate health information to your community
- Responding to trending health narratives
- Tackling misinformation
- Identifying credible sources of health information on social media
- Two ACP video series providing vaccine education and strategies to help combat health misinformation
- Articles and content published in Annals of Internal Medicine and I.M. Matters from ACP and more

LOBBYIST REPORT FROM DAVE REYNOLDS

Politics

Primary Runoff Elections: More Questions than Answers:

The Runoff elections yielded positive results for insurgent candidates knocking off most of the challenged incumbents. Let's get right into heart of the results impact of healthcare. The House Public Health committee will look very different in 2025. Whether we have a new Speaker or not, there will be a new Chair and several new Republicans serving; it will require contemplation and some speculating on a cogent strategy for a number of scenarios to move our legislative priorities forward. I anticipate we'll work on our strategy development and refinement right up to the Speakers vote and Speakers committee assignments announced in late January or early February. Over on the Senate side, stability under Lt Governor Patrick remains intact; unless Trump wins and Governor Abbott or Patrick (perhaps even Attorney General Paxton) are offered and accept to serve the Administration.

Lobbyists, consultants, members, staffers and other observers who spend their happy hour at the Texas Chili Parlor have come to very few conclusions at this point yet have brought up many questions that are simply ripe to answer. Uniformly though, folks believe that we should be prepared for change in the House (a lot of change); highly likely no Democrat will be appointed chair of any committee leaving 65+ of the House with a limited amount of "skin in the game" with plenty of free time to cause enough mischief to slow down or halt action on the House floor; 32 freshmen and likely an increase of one-term ideological members who have not a clue how to govern nor the interest in learning; and we should be comfortable with ambiguity. It looks like DC style zero-sum games is here to stay for the foreseeable future.

- Can/will Speaker Phelan build a 100 or so bipartisan coalition to fight off other Statewide's and maintain House independence? To date, two Representatives have announced their candidacies for Speaker of the House – Tom Oliverson MD of Houston and Shelby Slawson of Stephenville.
- Will the Democrats have a relevant vote on first day of session for the Speaker vote and House Rules?
- What is the West Texas monied oil interest's ROI on legislative rewards after their electoral success knocking off 15 members; can they keep momentum going through rest of politics and process cycle and hold on to gains in 2026?
- Likely consolidation of House Committees. It's thought that there is Simply not enough bench talent and/or experience to chair 41 substantive committees?
- Is anything in Texas politics still worth a monied fight in November? (Indeed, cynicism remains alive and well).

I'll re emphasize a point I have shared in the past, *Around the Capitol in Austin the hard and fast rule is to always remain flexible*. We will remain so, and we will be prepared to endeavor maximizing success within the confines of the politically possible.

Policy

Texas Primary Care Consortium: Texas Primary Care Consortium is the only multisectoral network focused on primary care in Texas. TPCC's mission is to advance equitable, comprehensive, and sustainable primary care for all Texans. Primary care, when prioritized in the health system, results in people living longer lives with more equitable outcomes. Yet primary care, with chronically

low funding and infrastructure investments, is in danger, as highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Texas Primary Care Consortium is working together to address the systemic issues of healthcare inequities, high costs, and lack of access. Since Sine Die last year the TPCC has met monthly to discuss and prioritize issues the Consortium will advocate before the Texas Legislature next year.

Many of the policy issues we advanced last session remain to be improved upon and passed. The group has taken a respite this Summer and we'll pick up our work in September.

Process

Building the Foundation of next year's appropriation priorities:

The Legislative Budget Board (LBB) is a permanent joint committee of the Texas Legislature and is co-chaired by the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House. The remaining board members are specified by statute to include the chair of the Senate Finance Committee; the chair of the House Appropriations Committee; the chair of the House Ways and Means Committee; three members of the senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; and two members of the house appointed by the Speaker.

The LBB develops budget and policy recommendations for legislative appropriations, completes fiscal analyses for proposed legislation, conducts evaluations and reviews to improve the efficiency and performance of state and local operations, and adopts constitutional and statutory spending limits.

The LBB has scheduled meetings starting in August through September. TxACPS is working with our Primary

Care sister societies and the Texas Medical Association to protect the current level (or more) of funding for the Primary Care Preceptorship Program, Graduate Medical Education at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and many other programs we support at the under the Health and Human Services Commission.

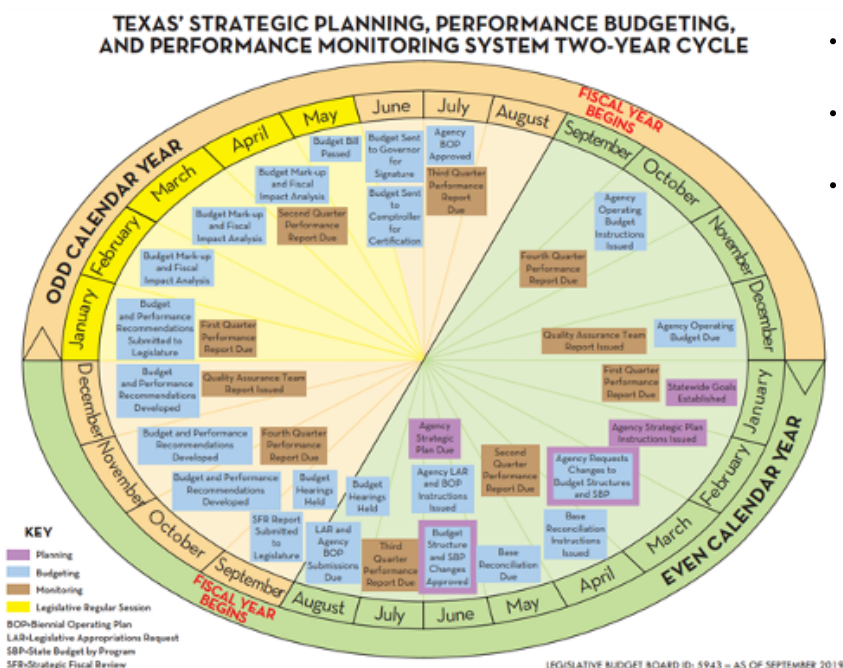
House Interim Studies

Last month I shared with you the Senate Interim Charges and an overview of the process. I think I might have said we shouldn't expect the Speaker to announce his charges until after the election and that the only person I know who predicted them to come sooner was from someone enjoying a few too many Mad Dog Margaritas. Well, maybe I should jump off the sobriety wagon I've been riding for eight years then perhaps I could be more prescient speculating. No, I won't break my promise to my family, but perhaps I should hit happy hours more often. Well, that guy was dead on as the charges came out the day after I sent out that lobby report.

On the healthcare front, we'll work several different committees. The House will work during the interim studying charges, I anticipate awkward interactions as members who worked against each other during the Primaries will be spending several hours in the same room with one another.

Speaker Charges TxACPS and the HPPC will be engaging and monitoring are the following:

- Appropriations: Mission Specific formula funding for Health-Related Institutions (HRI's);
- Defense and & Veteran Affairs: Professional license portability for military spouse;
- Human Services: Medicaid contracting, Support for Texans with intellectual disabilities;
- Public Health: Response to mental health emergencies; rural access to prenatal care;
- Of note, the Insurance committee will be studying amusement rides and firecrackers; and,
- The Select Committee on Healthcare Costs was eliminated.



ACP WEIGHS IN ON SUPREME COURT RULING

ACP published strong statements on some of the Supreme Court decisions that were issued at the end of June for cases that impact internal medicine physicians and their patients. As part of ACP's ongoing advocacy efforts, ACP had joined with other physician groups to file an amicus brief with the Supreme Court in each of the cases to advocate for a decision in the interest of physicians and patients. Two of the cases were in connection to access to reproductive health care services. One decision [allowing the FDA approval of mifepristone to remain in place](#) and another [determining that patients are entitled to emergency health care services](#). Other decisions include [allowing the federal government to combat medical misinformation on social media](#) and [restricting the federal government's ability to regulate bump stocks for firearms](#).

State Health Policy Legislative Tracking

ACP is tracking state legislation on key state health policy topics under consideration across the country. Check legislation under consideration in your state on the following topics below:

- [2024 Prior Authorization Bills](#)
- [2024 Reproductive Health Bills](#)
- [2024 Firearm Injury Prevention Bills](#)
- [2024 Scope of Practice Bills](#)
- [2024 Gender-Affirming Care Bills](#)

AI TECH TO AUGMENT PHYSICIAN DECISION-MAKING, NOT REPLACE IT

A new policy paper published in Annals of Internal Medicine, "[Artificial Intelligence in the Provision of Health Care](#)" explains how artificial intelligence (AI) in clinical health care has the potential to transform health care delivery, however it should not replace physician decision-making. The paper offers recommendations on the ethical, scientific and clinical components of AI use.

Accompanying this policy paper is a [video](#) featuring Isaac O. Opole, MBChB, PhD, MACP, ACP president, discussing the paper's recommendations for using AI in health care.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE SNYDER CHUMLEY AWARD

Do you know a member who has made a significant impact in grassroots activism, public policy and advocacy?

Nominate them for the Snyder/Chumley Award, recognizing individuals who have been outstanding Advocates for Internal Medicine. Help us honor those who are making a difference in their efforts to create positive change in their communities.



[Snyder/Chumley Advocate Award Nomination Form](#)

ACP Advocates for Internal Medicine Network

ENROLL

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