



ACP® Florida Services
American College of Physicians Chapter
Leading Internal Medicine, Improving Lives



FL Advocate Newsletter

Manning Hanline, Jr, MD FACP FACEP, President/Governor ❖ George Everett, MD MACP, Governor

WEEK ONE OF SESSION - TALLAHASSEE — MARCH 4, 2021

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We have just concluded the first week at the State Capitol, where lobbyists are not allowed in the lobby, making our legislative communications a new art form that includes stalking on the streets, finding legislators at the bar, remote testifying, zoom calls, text messages, and Facebook messaging. It is a new world, but we are getting it done.

Almost 2,000 bills have been filed, and the major issues for the Session have already seen significant action. Among the most notable actions are:

Covid Liability: After weeks of discussion, I am happy to report that Senator Brandes' SB 74, which would immunize (pun intended) health care providers from Covid-linked liability unless the provider's conduct amounted to gross and willful misconduct, has passed two committees in the Senate. The same is true of its House counterpart, HB 7005, which now only has one committee stop left. Our testimony on this issue is important, as many of our members had to suspend procedures due to a state moratorium on elective procedures and put themselves in harm's way to treat patients as best they could. Our heroes should not be punished for having obeyed State and CDC guidelines.

Independent Practice: The APRNs do not want to be limited to primary care independent practice and have filed HB 111 and SB 424. We are actively opposing both. Moreover, the PAs have filed legislation that would put them on a level with the APRNs. Fortunately, neither bill has yet to be placed on an agenda, but we did testify against an expanded Optometry Scope of Practice bill this week and succeeded in at least having that bill temporarily postponed.

Pelvic Examination: We evidently have convinced the sponsors of last year's bill that the legislation was overboard, and they each have filed bills that would severely curtail the reach of last year's action. SB 716 and HB 361.

Telehealth: There appears to be a consensus that telehealth has worked well during the Pandemic, and nine different bills have been filed to allow increased prescribing and telephone calls. I expect these to ultimately be combined into a single piece of legislation.

TIME+: Rep. Massullo has filed HB 421, which provides for strict penalties and DOH enforcement for violations of the Truth in Medical Education Law, including misrepresenting one's specialty. Likewise, Senator Ray Rodriguez has filed the Senate companion, SB 1142.

It looks like it is going to be a busy Session, but we are pleased that we have some great issues to pursue. Let us know if you have any questions, comments, and/or concerns. Mr. Nuland can be reached at nulandlaw@aol.com or you can contact the Chapter office at DMoerings@floridachapteracp.org.

Thank you. Stay safe.

ADVOCATES FOR INTERNAL MEDICINE NETWORK

Join more than 15,000 colleagues in the Advocates for Internal Medicine Network (AIMn) in advocating for the interests of internal medicine in Washington, D.C. The AIMn program is for ACP members interested in participating in federal advocacy. It is designed to help members engage with their federal lawmakers on policy issues important to ACP and internal medicine.

Enroll now: <https://cqrcengage.com/acplac/app/register?0&m=13815>

LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER

As key issues approach the decision-making stage on Capitol Hill, the College emails or faxes legislative alerts to AIMn members through our Legislative Action Center (LAC). Legislative alerts include all of the necessary information (including sample messages that can be easily personalized) to make informative contacts with members of Congress, and ACP staff is always available to provide support and answer legislative questions.

Once enrolled as an Advocate you can use the College's LAC to respond easily to current ACP legislative alerts, identify your federal legislators, monitor important legislation, and e-mail or call your members of Congress.

Legislative Action Center: <https://cqrcengage.com/acplac/home?0>