Dear Oregon ACP Colleague,

On behalf of the Oregon ACP Health & Public Policy Committee, I want to thank you for answering our survey regarding state health policy priorities for Oregon ACP. We asked, and you answered. We received many survey responses, and many helpful comments from Oregon ACP members about policy issues affecting our patients and our profession.

Your health policy priorities – including universal health care, climate change, substance use disorder, and social determinants such as housing – guided our priorities for the 2022 Oregon legislative session. I want to give you an update on our advocacy efforts, and how things turned out during the 2022 legislative session in Salem.

**Oregon ACP Advocacy in Salem**

Oregon ACP held its 3rd annual Advocacy Day. More than 60 people attended, including students, residents, early and late career physicians. Participants met with a dozen state representatives and state senators to advocate for the Oregon ACP issues. Below is a summary of the bills and budget items we supported.

- **Universal health care**
  - HB4035 (we supported) passed. The bill, initially conceived as legislation to create a “Public Option” insurance plan in Oregon, was amended down to a bill that will create new processes to ensure that people who obtained insurance via Medicaid during the Public Health Emergency (PHE) will retain coverage when the PHE ends and will create a task force to develop a proposal to create a “Bridge Plan” which will provide coverage for Oregonians whose incomes are above the Medicaid eligibility threshold. Oregon ACP joined a coalition group representing health care consumers, physicians, community groups and policy experts in supporting and advocating for the legislation. Oregon ACP also submitted testimony in support of the bill. A summary of the bill and what it means for health care coverage for Oregonians, can be found [here](#). Oregon ACP will continue to work with the coalition to advocate on this issue.

- **Addressing houselessness**
  - $400 million in the budget pledged to homeless services, building affording housing and helping low-income Oregonians purchase homes.
  - HB4123 (we supported) passed. The bill requires the Oregon Dept. of Administrative Services to provide grants to coordinate local homeless response systems. It awaits the Governor’s signature.

- **Climate change and health**
  - SB1536 (we supported) passed. The “Access to Cooling” bill seeks to mitigate the effects of climate change by limiting restrictions on portable cooling devices in residences by landlords, homeowner associations, and local governments. The bill awaits the Governor’s signature.
  - HB4085 (we supported) was rolled into SB1536. HB4085 called for the OHA to create and distribute air conditions and air purifier an emergency basis to individual eligible for medical assistance. These provisions were passed in SB1536. The bill awaits the Governor’s signature.
• **Treatment for substance use disorder**
  o HB4081 (we supported) remained in committee upon adjournment of the session. The bill would have required pharmacists who dispense opioid prescriptions to offer a prescription for naloxone in certain circumstances. Whether the bill will be introduced next year remains unclear given that Rep. Prusak (a Nurse Practitioner and Chair of the House Health Care Committee), chief sponsor of the bill, announced that she will not seek re-election.

**Want to Get Involved?**
If you have an interest in advocacy or passion for an issue that affects patients and profession, we invite you to get involved with Oregon ACP’s advocacy efforts. Advocacy is an opportunity to build community with colleagues, counter cynicism, tell our stories to policymakers, and create lasting change. If you’re interested in getting involved, consider these opportunities with Oregon ACP:

• Co-author a Resolution – Every member of ACP and the Oregon Chapter has the opportunity to give input on the development of the College’s policies and priorities. If you have ideas for policies or positions, reach out to the Health & Public Policy Committee for discussion and consider helping to write and submit a resolution supporting your idea.

• Oregon ACP Advocacy Day – Our annual Advocacy Day will next take place in February 2023. The one-day event includes policy briefings, advocacy skill building workshops, and meetings with legislators. Keep an eye out for registration details later this year!

• Oregon ACP Advocacy Day Planning Committee – Planning and coordinating the annual Advocacy Day event begins in the Fall. Membership in the committee is open, and new members are welcome.

• Oregon ACP Health & Public Policy Committee – The Health & Public Policy Committee tracks and responds to the Chapter’s policy priorities at the state and national level. Activities include organizing letter-writing campaigns, submitting public testimony, sponsoring ACP Advocacy Day, and partnering with other community organizations to promote the health and wellbeing of Oregonians.

• ACP Leadership Day, the College’s annual two-day advocacy event in Washington DC, will occur on May 17-18, 2022 in Washington DC. Registration is now open. The Oregon Chapter has a long tradition of sending a delegation to Washington, and looks forward to sending another delegation this year. As of now, we do not expect a virtual attendance option to be offered.

If you are interested in getting involved, or have questions, do not hesitate to contact me at joel.burnett.md@gmail.com.

All the Best,
Joel Burnett, MD
Chair, Oregon ACP Health & Public Policy Committee