**ACS State Affairs Legislative Update – May 16, 2025**

**STATE AFFAIRS WORKGROUP**

Arnold Baskies, MD, FACS (NJ); Ali Kasraeian, MD, FACS (FL); Kevin Koo, MD, FACS (MN); David Santos, MD, FACS (TX); and Kelly Swords, MD, FACS (CA). The Workgroup plays a critical role in identifying state advocacy priorities, setting new policy objectives, and evaluating state advocacy grant applications among other duties.

**ACS STATE AFFAIRS PRIORITY ISSUES**

* Trauma System Funding and Development
* Cancer Screening, Testing, and Treatment
* Insurance and Administrative Burden
* Professional Liability
* Criminalization of Physician Care
* Access to Surgical Care
* Health Equity

For more information regarding ACS State Affairs Policy Priorities in your state, please contact Catherine Hendricks, State Affairs Manager, at [chendricks@facs.org](mailto:chendricks@facs.org) or Cory Bloom, State Affairs Associate, at [cbloom@facs.org](mailto:cbloom@facs.org). To view a complete list of bills ACS State Affairs is tracking, visit our online [State Legislative Tracker.](https://www.quorum.us/spreadsheet/external/QGjJBFIfORzJNAtlNvfp/)

**ACS GRANT PROGRAM**

State Chapters are eligible to apply for ACS State Advocacy Grants and may use funds towards their annual state advocacy day, to hire a lobbyist, or other relevant advocacy functions such as travel costs for members, catering, venue rentals, printing, and more. To learn more information regarding the ACS State Advocacy Grants, apply [here](https://www.facs.org/advocacy/state-legislation/chapter-state-advocacy-grant-program/).

**STATE ADVOCACY DAYS**

Wisconsin: June 3, Madison

**IN THE NEWS**

**UnitedHealth settles cancer coverage suit for $9M**

UnitedHealthcare has agreed to pay more than $9 million to settle a class-action lawsuit alleging the insurer wrongfully denied coverage for proton beam therapy, a type of specialized cancer treatment.

According to court documents filed May 9, the insurer will pay up to $75,000 to members in employer-sponsored plans diagnosed with prostate, primary-central nervous system or cervical cancer who had claims for proton beam therapy denied and paid for the treatment out-of-pocket.

The total payments to members will be capped at $6.75 million. UnitedHealthcare will also pay $2 million in attorney fees and awards to lead plaintiffs in the case.

UnitedHealthcare will also change its coverage policies for proton beam therapy as part of the agreement, a move the plaintiffs say will make it easier for members to have requests for the therapy approved. As part of the change, UnitedHealthcare will eliminate a list of thirteen diagnoses for which proton beam therapy was considered “unproven and not medically necessary,” according to agreement. Read more [here](https://www.beckerspayer.com/payer/unitedhealth-settles-cancer-coverage-suit-for-9m/?origin=PayerE&utm_source=PayerE&utm_medium=email&utm_content=newsletter&oly_enc_id=7464A0943223E2B).

**STATUS OF LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS**

Legislative adjournments: Alabama (5/14); Arkansas (5/5); Colorado (5/7); Georgia (4/4); Hawaii (5/2); Idaho (4/4); Indiana (4/24); Iowa (5/14); Kansas (4/11); Kentucky (3/28); Maryland (4/7); Mississippi (4/3); Missouri (5/15); Montana (4/30); New Mexico (3/22); North Dakota (5/3); South Carolina (5/8); South Dakota (3/31); Tennessee (4/22); Utah (3/7); Virginia (2/22); Washington (4/27); West Virginia (4/12), and Wyoming (3/6).

**LEGISLATIVE TRACKING**

**ARIZONA**

[HB 2175](https://apps.azleg.gov/BillStatus/GetDocumentPdf/529449) – Artificial Intelligence **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Julie Willoughby (R), HB 2175 requires that before a health insurer can deny a claim or a prior authorization (PA) request, the medical director must individually review the denial; review requires the medical director to exercise independent medical judgment without solely relying on external recommendations; aims to ensure denials of claims and PA are thoroughly and independently evaluated. Governor Katie Hobbs (D) signed the bill into law May 12.

[HB 2589](https://apps.azleg.gov/BillStatus/GetDocumentPdf/521443) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Cesar Aguilar (D), HB 2589 prohibits public and private employers from requiring current or prospective employees to agree to noncompete clauses as a condition of employment. The bill was introduced in the House and read.

[SB 1395](https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/57leg/1R/laws/0140.pdf) – Licensure **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Thomas Shope (R), amends licensure requirements for international medical school graduates from unapproved allopathic schools; applicants must hold a standard certificate issued by the educational commission for foreign medical graduates; must ether complete a fifth pathway program, serve as a full time assistant professor or higher in an approved medical school for 36 months or be enrolled in an approved twenty-four-month hospital internship, residency or clinical fellowship program. Governor Katie Hobbs (D) signed the bill into law May 7.

**GEORGIA**

[HB 197](https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20252026/239305) – Prior Authorization **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Lee Hawkins (R), HB 197 requires health insurers to discuss treatment plans with health care professionals before adverse determinations regarding medical necessity; discussion must occur with a clinical peer trained in a related specialty during normal business hours. Governor Brian Kemp (R) signed the bill into law May 14.

[SB 72](https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20252026/230921) – Professional Liability **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Matt Brass (R), SB 72 exempts physicians from liability related to recommending or administering investigational treatments for patients with severe illnesses. Governor Brian Kemp (R) signed the bill into law May 12.

[SB 130](https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20252026/238592) – Rural Health Workforce **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Mike Hodges (R), SB 130 expands medical education funding and loan programs to those who agree to practice medicine in underserved rural areas upon graduation. Governor Brian Kemp (R) signed the bill into law May 13.

**INDIANA**

[HB 1555](https://iga.in.gov/pdf-documents/124/2025/house/bills/HB1555/HB1555.05.ENRS.pdf) – Licensure **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Beau Baird (R), HB 1555 allows international medical graduates to obtain a limited license to practice in underserved areas; applicants must hold a medical degree from an accredited international program, have been certified by the educational commission on foreign medical graduates, and possess a written employment offer; limited license is valid for two years and can be renewed for up to six years, with the possibility of conversion to an unlimited license after five years. Governor Mike Braun (R) signed the bill into law May 6.

[HB 1625](https://iga.in.gov/pdf-documents/124/2025/house/bills/HB1625/HB1625.01.INTR.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Christopher Judy (R), HB 1625 prohibits noncompete agreements starting July 1, 2025; creates an exception for agreements entered into before the specified date. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Employment, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

**LOUISIANA**

[HCR 44](https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1414043) – Cancer

Introduced by Representative Delisha Boyd (D), HCR 44 urges the department of health to lower the recommended age for routine mammograms screening for breast cancer from forty to thirty years old. The resolution was filed in the House and is pending introduction.

[SR 98](https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1413161) – Cancer

Introduced by Senator Beth Mizell (R), SR 98 requests the department of health to educate the public on lung cancer risk factors and to promote lung cancer screenings. The resolution was introduced in the Senate and is pending referral.

**MARYLAND**

[HB 869](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/hb/hb0869f.pdf) – Telehealth **ENACTED**

Introduced by Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk (D), HB 869 includes audio-only telephone conversations in the definition of telehealth for reimbursement purposes; requires reimbursement parity for telehealth and in-person services. Governor Wes Moore (D) signed the bill into law May 13.

[HB 1288](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/hb/hb1288f.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Delegate April Rose (R), HB 1288 voids noncompete clauses for those in health care positions earning $350,000 or less annually; health care workers who make more than $350,000 can enter into noncompete clauses for a duration of one-year post-employment and encompasses a geographical limit no higher than ten miles from the primary place of employment. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Economic Matters Committee.

[SB 372](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/sb/sb0372f.pdf) – Telehealth **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Pamela Beidle (D), SB 372 removes the expiration date for audio-only telehealth coverage; requires reimbursement parity between telehealth and in-person encounters. Governor Wes Moore (D) signed the bill into law May 13.

[SB 658](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/sb/sb0658f.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Senator Justin Ready (R), SB 658 voids noncompete clauses for those in healthcare positions earning $350,000 or less annually; health care workers who make more than $350,000 can enter into noncompete clauses for a duration of one-year post-employment and which encompass a geographical limit no higher than ten miles from the primary place of employment. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Finance Committee.

**MASSACHUSETTS**

[H 4001](https://legiscan.com/MA/bill/H4001/2025) – Cancer

Introduced by the Ways and Means Committee, H 4001 allocates $3,368,962 for the promotion of health and disease prevention including breast cancer, ovarian cancer, colorectal cancer, and prostate cancer prevention, screening, education, and treatment. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

**MICHIGAN**

[HB 4040](https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2025-2026/billintroduced/House/pdf/2025-HIB-4040.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Denise Mentzer (D), HB 4040 prohibits businesses from entering into noncompete agreements with workers unless the worker is an owner selling their business or a significant portion of its assets. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Economic Competitiveness Committee.

[SB 180](https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2025-2026/billengrossed/Senate/pdf/2025-SEBS-0180.pdf) – Trauma System Funding

Introduced by Senator Sylvia Santana (D), SB 180 allocates two million dollars for a three-year trauma recovery pilot program at a level I designated trauma facility for adults. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Appropriations Committee.

**MISSOURI**

[HB 448](https://documents.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills251/hlrbillspdf/0319H.01I.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Ian Mackey (D), HB 448 prohibits noncompete clauses in physician employment contracts. The bill was filed in the House and is pending introduction.

**MONTANA**

[SB 449](https://bills.legmt.gov/#/lc/bill/2/LC3200) – Prior Authorization **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Vince Ricci (R), SB 449 requires health insurers to honor prior authorizations (PA) for at least 90 days when enrollees switch plans; forbids retroactive denials of service once PA is granted; requires health insurers to accept and respond to PA requests electronically. Governor Greg Gianforte (R) signed the bill into law May 8.

**NEBRASKA**

[LB 308](https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/109/PDF/Intro/LB308.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Senator Teresa Ibach (R), LB 308 prohibits health care staffing agencies from including noncompete clauses in contracts with a staff worker or health care entity. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Business and Labor Committee.

**NEW JERSEY**

[A 1819](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/A2000/1819_I1.PDF) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Herb Conaway (D), A1819 voids restrictive covenants in physicians contracts if they restrict the physicians' right to practice in a geographic area after the termination of their professional relationship; exceptions include leaving a hospital system or group practice with 30 or more physicians to join another similar-sized entity within the same geographic area or leaving a smaller group practice to join another small group within the same area. The bill was introduced in the Assembly and referred to the Health Committee.

[A 1825](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/A2000/1825_U2.PDF) –Step-Therapy **ENACTED**

Introduced by Assemblymember Herb Conaway (D), A 1825 requires health insurers provide clear processes for requesting step-therapy exceptions; insurers must grant exceptions when a drug is expected to be ineffective or not in the patient's best interest; insurers must respond to step-therapy requests within 72 hours for standard requests and 24 hours for urgent requests. Governor Phil Murphy (D) signed the bill into law May 8.

[S 4068](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/S4500/4068_I1.PDF) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Senator Troy Singleton (D), S 4068 voids restrictive covenants in physicians' contracts if they restrict the physicians' right to practice in a geographic area after the termination of their professional relationship; exceptions include leaving a hospital system or group practice with 30 or more physicians to join another similar-sized entity within the same geographic area or leaving a smaller group practice to join another small group within the same area. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Health, Human Services, and Senior Citizens Committee.

[S 4309](https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2024/S4500/4309_I1.PDF) – Cancer

Introduced by Senator Linda Greenstein (D), S 4309 requires health insurers to provide no cost sharing diagnostic and supplemental breast examinations. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Commerce Committee.

[S 4457](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2024/S4457) – Scope of Practice

Introduced by Senator Joseph Lagana (D), S 4457 changes the title of “physician assistant” to “physician associate.” The bill was filed in the Senate and is pending introduction.

**NEW YORK**

[A 1361](https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2025/A1361) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz (D), A 1361 allows any employer to require an employee enter into a restrictive covenant as a condition of employment provided they are reasonable, disclosed 30 days in advance, and not overly restrictive; employers must provide a written policy on good cause termination with violations of a restrictive covenant resulting in a civil fine of up to $5,000 per affected employee. The bill was introduced in the Assembly and referred to the Labor Committee.

[S 1305A](https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2025/S1305A) – Cancer

Introduced by Senator Julia Salazar (D), S 1305A requires hospitals provide information on breast reconstruction options and insurance coverage to patients undergoing mastectomy, lumpectomy, or lymph node dissection. The bill was introduced in the Assembly and referred to the Women’s Issues Committee.

[S 7896](https://legislation.nysenate.gov/pdf/bills/2025/S7896) – Artificial Intelligence

Introduced by Senator Kristen Gonzalez (D), S 7896 requires any health insurers using artificial intelligence (AI) in utilization reviews to use information based on an insured's medical history, individual clinical circumstances, and other relevant information, rather than solely on group datasets; prohibits AI from replacing health care provider decision making; requires determinations of medical necessity be made by health care professionals. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Health Committee.

**NORTH CAROLINA**

[H 973](https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2025/Bills/House/PDF/H973v1.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Tim Longest (D), H 973 prohibits noncompete agreements for employees unless they are made in connection with the sale or ownership of a business; noncompete clauses must be defined in terms of duration, geographical area, and scope. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Rules Committee.

**OHIO**

[HB 271](https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_136/legislation/hb271/00_IN/pdf/) – Cancer

Introduced by Representative Jean Schmidt (R), HB 271 requires health insurers and Medicaid to provide no cost-sharing coverage for breast cancer screenings and examinations. The bill was introduced in the House and is pending referral to a committee.

**OKLAHOMA**

[HB 2050](https://www.oklegislature.gov/cf_pdf/2025-26%20ENR/hB/HB2050%20ENR.PDF) – Licensure **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Preston Stinson (R), HB 2050 allows foreign medical graduates to apply for a limited license where they must practice under supervision from the chair of the department within their intended practice for three years before the board may grant an unlimited license; applicants must possess a doctor of medicine degree or equivalent from a foreign medical school recognized by the educational commission for foreign medical graduates, be in good standing, and have an employment offer. Governor Kevin Stitt (R) signed the bill into law May 7.

[SB 929](https://www.oklegislature.gov/cf_pdf/2025-26%20ENR/SB/SB929%20ENR.PDF) – Licensure **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator John Haste (R), SB 929 requires osteopathic physicians complete criminal background checks; complete annual education in pain management or opioid use; licensees must maintain malpractice liability insurance; report any criminal investigations or practice limitations within fourteen days to the osteopathic board. The bill became law without the governor’s signature on May 12.

**PENNSYLVANIA**

[HR 225](https://www.palegis.us/legislation/bills/text/PDF/2025/0/HR0225/PN1572) – Cancer **ADOPTED**

Introduced by Representative Arvind Venkat (D), HR 225 designates May 13, 2025, as cancer action day. The resolution was adopted by the House May 13.

[SR 108](https://www.palegis.us/legislation/bills/text/PDF/2025/0/SR0108/PN0787) – Cancer

Introduced by Senator Carolyn Comitta (D), SR 108 designates May 13, 2025, as cancer action day. The resolution was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee.

**RHODE ISLAND**

[H 6317](https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/BillText/BillText25/HouseText25/H6317.pdf) – Prior Authorization

Introduced by Representative Mia Ackerman (D), H 6317 requires a standardized form for prior authorizations which cannot exceed two pages and must be made available electronically; requires health insurers to create an online payor portal. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Health and Human Services Committee.

[S 302](https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/BillText/BillText25/SenateText25/S0302.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Senator Matthew LaMountain (D), S 302 prohibits noncompete agreements for employees unless pursuant to an agreement to sell a business entity or an equity interest in a business. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

[H 3273](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/3273_20241205.htm) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Todd Rutherford (D), HB 3273 voids noncompete agreements for physicians working for nonprofit health care organizations earning an annual revenue of over one billion dollars. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Labor, Commerce, and Industry Committee.

[H 4544](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/4544_20250508.htm) – Professional Liability

Introduced by Representative Wallace Jordan (R), H 4544 prohibits limitations on noneconomic damages in professional liability cases if the provider acted in a grossly negligent, willful, wanton, or reckless matter or has pled guilty to or been convicted of a felony arising out of the same course of conduct related to the case and the maximum limit of civil liability cannot exceed eight times the current limitations on noneconomic damages. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

[H 4562](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/4562_20250508.htm) – Prior Authorization

Introduced by Representative Heath Sessions (R), H 4562 excludes health care providers from prior authorization (PA) requirements for one year if they meet an 80% threshold approval for requests; prohibits ongoing (PA) for chronic conditions once initially approved; requires adverse determinations to be made by a physician who has experience treating patients with the same medical condition or disease for which the health care service is being requested; PA requests must be responded to within 48 hours for standard requests and 24 hours for urgent requests. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Labor, Commerce, and Industry Committee.

[S 46](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/46_20241211.htm) – Restrictive Covenants/Corporate Practice of Medicine

Introduced by Senator Tom Davis (R), S 46 declares any contract provisions interfering with the physician-patient relationship or allowing for the corporate practice of medicine are against public policy; prohibits contract provisions which include a geographic or time restriction on a physician's practice post termination. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Labor, Commerce, and Industry Committee.

[S 669](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/669_20250508.htm) – Scope of Practice

Introduced by Senator Daniel Verdin (R), S 669 requires advanced practice registered nurses, physician assistants, and anesthesiologist assistants must practice as part of a patient care team under the collaboration or supervision by a physician; creates the team based health care committee which must include five physicians to focus on the implementation and ongoing oversight of team-based health care. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Medical Affairs Committee.

**VERMONT**

[H 96](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2026/Docs/BILLS/H-0096/H-0096%20As%20Passed%20by%20Both%20House%20and%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf) – Certificate of Need **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Mari Cordes (D), H 96 increases the monetary threshold for health care projects requiring a certificate of need from $1.5 million to $10 million. Governor Phil Scott (R) signed the bill into law May 13.

[H 205](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2026/Docs/BILLS/H-0205/H-0205%20As%20Introduced.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Michael Marcotte (R), H 205 prohibits noncompete agreements for physicians who earn less than $100,000 or more annually; those making more than $100,000 must have the noncompete agreement presented to them at the time of the employment offer. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Commerce and Economic Development Committee.

[H 334](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2026/Docs/BILLS/H-0334/H-0334%20As%20Introduced.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants

Introduced by Representative Kate Logan (D), H 334 voids noncompete agreements in employment contracts unless they involve the sale of ownership in a business or the dissolution of a partnership. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the General and Housing Committee.

[S 28](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2026/Docs/BILLS/S-0028/S-0028%20As%20Passed%20by%20Both%20House%20and%20Senate%20Unofficial.pdf) – Truth in Advertising **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Ruth Hardy (D), S 28 prohibits misleading advertising to encompass all health care services; establishes misleading advertising as unprofessional conduct. Governor Phil Scott (R) signed the bill into law May 13.

[S 154](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2026/Docs/BILLS/S-0154/S-0154%20As%20Introduced.pdf) – Biomarker

Introduced by Senator Martine Gulick (D), S 154 requires health insurers and Medicaid to provide coverage for biomarker testing. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Finance Committee.

**WISCONSIN**

[AB 257](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/related/proposals/ab257.pdf) – Scope of Practice

Introduced by Representative Tony Kurtz (R), AB 257 allows advanced practice registered nurses to practice independently after completing 3,840 hours of advanced practice nursing in collaboration with a physician. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Health, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee.

**WYOMING**

[SF 107](https://wyoleg.gov/2025/Enroll/SF0107.pdf) – Restrictive Covenants **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Tara Nethercott (R), SF 107 voids noncompete agreements for physicians. Governor Mark Gordon (R) signed the bill into law March 19.