

## ACS State Affairs Legislative Update – April 17, 2026

### STATE AFFAIRS WORKGROUP

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### ACS STATE AFFAIRS PRIORITY ISSUES

- Prior Authorization
- Restrictive Covenants
- Private Equity/Corporate Practice of Medicine
- Scope of Practice
- Cancer/Biomarker
- Rural Surgery
- Telemedicine
- Professional Liability
- Continuing Medical Education/Maintenance of Certification
- Trauma funding
- Pre-hospital blood

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). To view a complete list of bills ACS State Affairs is tracking, visit our online [State Legislative Tracker](#).

### 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](#).

### STATUS OF LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

Legislatures not in session: Montana; Nevada; North Dakota; and Texas have no legislative session in 2026. The following legislatures have adjourned: Alabama (4/9); Florida (3/13); Georgia (4/2); Idaho (4/2); Indiana (2/27); Kansas (4/11); Kentucky (4/15); Maryland (4/13); Mississippi (4/15); New Mexico (2/19); Oregon (3/6); South Dakota (3/30); Utah (3/6); Virginia (3/14); Washington (3/12); West Virginia (3/14); Wisconsin (3/17); and Wyoming (3/11). State legislative session information for 2026 can be found [here](#).

### LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

#### ALABAMA

#### HB 40 – Cancer **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Jeremy Gray (D), HB 40 requires health insurers to provide no cost sharing prostate cancer screenings for all men over 50 and high-risk men over 40. Governor Kay Ivey (R) signed the bill into law April 9.

## **DELAWARE**

### [SS 1 for SB 120](#) – Biomarker

Introduced by Senator Spiros Mantzavinos (D), SS 1 for SB 120 requires health insurers provide coverage for biomarker testing when deemed medically necessary and supported by medical and scientific evidence; excludes coverage for biomarker testing used solely for screening purposes or for investigatory and experimental tests subject to FDA investigational device exemptions. The bill was Adopted in lieu of SB 120 in the Senate and referred to the Banking, Business, Insurance and Technology Committee.

## **HAWAII**

### [SR 177](#) – Trauma **ADOPTED**

Introduced by Senator Angus McKelvey (D), SR 177 requests the governor and health department to work with the U.S. Department of Defense and other military partners to explore establishing a military-civilian trauma partnership. The Resolution was Adopted April 7.

### [SCR 182](#) – Trauma **ADOPTED**

Introduced by Senator Angus McKelvey (D), SCR 182 requests the governor and health department to work with the U.S. Department of Defense and other military partners to explore establishing a military-civilian trauma partnership. The Resolution was Adopted April 15.

## **IOWA**

### [SF 2190](#) – Scope of Practice **ENACTED**

Introduced by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee, SF 2190 changes all references to "physician assistant" to "physician associate" in state law; does not change scope of practice or professional rights. Governor Kim Reynolds (R) signed the bill into law April 9.

## **KANSAS**

### [HB 2702](#) – Scope of Practice **ENACTED**

Introduced by the House Health and Human Services Committee, HB 2702 changes the title "physician assistant" to "physician associate" (PA); PAs with at least 4,000 hours of postgraduate clinical experience and no disciplinary history may practice in collaboration with a physician under a collaborative agreements, PAs with less experience must work under the supervision of a physician; PAs must maintain professional liability insurance as a condition for renewing their active licenses. Governor Laura Kelly (D) signed the bill into law April 9.

## **KENTUCKY**

### [HB 176](#) – Prior Authorization **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Kimberly Moser (R), HB 176 requires health insurers to allow health care providers to qualify for exemptions from prior authorization (PA) if they meet criteria like high approval rates, value-based care participation, and compliance with standards; health care providers are evaluated annually for exemption eligibility and insurers must notify them within 30 days if they meet eligibility for the exemptions. Governor Andy Beshear (D) signed the bill into law April 13.

### [HB 388](#) – Scope of Practice **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Robert Duvall (R), HB 388 authorizes optometrists and physician assistants to prescribe, dispense, and administer a controlled substance. Governor Andy Beshear (D) signed the bill into law April 7.

[SB 116](#) – Scope of Practice **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Scott Madon (R), SB 116 replaces the previous model for a physician assistant (PA) supervision by a supervising physician with a collaboration model, to a physician PA working under a collaborating physician through a formal collaboration agreement; the agreement outlines the PA's scope of practice, communication, and decision-making processes, and must be kept on file and made available to the medical board upon request; allows PAs to prescribe and administer controlled substances under specified conditions and limits. Governor Andy Beshear (D) signed the bill into law April 10.

[SB 137](#) – Licensure **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Stephen Meredith (R), SB 137 creates a new medical license with specific requirements for both U.S. and international medical graduates (IMG); introduces a provisional license, allowing experienced international physicians with at least 5 years of practice, in good standing, and postgraduate training who have a job offer from a licensed health care entity to practice medicine; provisional license lasts for three years with the sponsoring employer, after three years, it automatically becomes a regular license, and the physician is no longer required to stay with the original employer; applicants must pass a board exam; the board has discretion to grant or deny licenses. Governor Andy Beshear (D) signed the bill into law April 10.

**NEW YORK**

[A 10893](#) – Cancer

Introduced by Assemblymember Chantel Jackson (D), A 10893 lowers the minimum age for annual mammogram coverage from thirty-five to thirty. The bill was introduced in the Assembly and referred to the Insurance Committee.

[A 10981](#) – Restrictive Covenant

Introduced by Assemblymember Chris Burdick (D), A 10981 prohibits noncompete agreements for licensed medical professionals, including physicians; allows affected professionals to bring civil actions for violations within two years of the violation, with courts empowered to void offending agreements and award damages up to \$10,000 per professional, plus other remedies such as lost compensation and attorney fees. The bill was introduced in the Assembly and referred to the Labor Committee.

**MAINE**

[LD 1502](#) – Cancer **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Matt Moonen (D), LD 1502 requires health insurers to provide no cost-sharing prostate cancer screenings; requires health insurers cover prostate cancer screenings when supported by medical and scientific evidence according to the most recently published nationally recognized clinical practice guidelines. Governor Janet Mills (D) signed the bill into law April 15.

[LD 2201](#) – Private Equity **ENACTED**

Introduced by Representative Kristi Mathieson (D), LD 2201 refines the regulatory review process for health care transactions involving private equity companies, hedge funds, or management services organizations when these entities acquire majority ownership or operational control of a health care entity. Governor Janet Mills (D) signed the bill into law April 13.

## **MINNESOTA**

[SF 3298](#) – Scope of Practice

Introduced by Senator Melissa Wiklund (D), SF 3298 changes the title "physician assistant" to "physician associate" in all state statutes. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Health and Human Services Committee.

## **MISSISSIPPI**

[SB 2474](#) – Certificate of Need **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Hob Bryan (D), SB 2474 would exempt from the certificate of need process any rural hospital who wants to construct, develop, or establish new health care facilities, relocate equipment, change bed numbers, or offer new services. Governor Tate Reeves (R) signed the bill into law April 8.

## **MISSOURI**

[HB 2556](#) – Scope of Practice

Introduced by Representative Cathy Loy (R), HB 2556 restricts the use of medical titles and specialty designations like "physician," "doctor of medicine," and "surgeon" exclusively for licensed physicians; patients can sue for damages, injunctions, punitive damages for willful violations, and attorney's fees for improper use of these reserved titles; licensing boards can discipline violators. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to the Health and Mental Health Committee.

## **OKLAHOMA**

[HR 1045](#) – Cancer **ADOPTED**

Introduced by Representative Cynthia Roe (R), HR 1045 designates the second week in April as Lung Cancer Action Week to promote awareness, early detection, and advocacy for lung cancer prevention and treatment. The bill was introduced in the House and Adopted April 9.

[SR 40](#) – Cancer **ADOPTED**

Introduced by Senator Brenda Stanley (R), SR 40 establishes the second week of April as Lung Cancer Action Week to promote awareness, screening, and research for lung cancer. The Resolution was Adopted April 9.

## **RHODE ISLAND**

[S 3189](#) – Professional Liability

Introduced by Senator Stefano Famiglietti (D), S 3189 repeals the collateral source rule in medical malpractice cases; prohibits introducing evidence of payments from health insurance or workers' compensation received by plaintiffs, used by juries to reduce damage awards by those amounts. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

## **VIRGINIA**

### **HB 481 – Insurance **ENACTED****

Introduced by Delegate Patrick Hope (D), HB 481 requires physician review of denials. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 13.

### **HB 676 – Insurance **ENACTED****

Introduced by Delegate Michelle Maldonado (D), HB 676 requires all claims-related documents, notifications, and communications between providers and carriers to be submitted electronically; health insurers cannot require paper or fax submissions and must offer providers a no-fee electronic payment option if requested. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 6.

### **HB 736 – Insurance **ENACTED****

Introduced by Delegate Michelle Maldonado (D), HB 736 requires health insurers to accept prior authorization (PA) requests electronically and respond within 24 hours for urgent requests and two business days for standard requests; PA must last at least six months for initial approvals and 12 months for continued use; if the patient switches insurance plans the new insurer must honor existing PA for at least 90 days; insurers must keep a tracking system for all PA requests and make information accessible online. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 6.

### **HB 746 – Scope of Practice **ENACTED****

Introduced by Delegate Rozia Henson (D), HB 746 allows physician assistants (PA) to practice independently after completing at least three years of full-time clinical experience (defined as 1,800 hours per year) under a practice agreement; once authorized, independent PAs must practice within their training and experience, consult and collaborate with other healthcare providers as needed, and have a plan for referring complex or emergency cases to physicians. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 8.

### **HB 813 – Cancer **ENACTED****

Introduced by Delegate Richard Sullivan (D), HB 813 clarifies any prohibition on cost-sharing requirements, such as copayments, coinsurance, or deductibles, for enrollees applies only when health care services are received from participating providers under the enrollee's health plan. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 6.

### **HB 1337 – Certificate of Need **ENACTED****

Introduced by Delegate Nadarius Clark (D), HB 1337 expedites the certificate of need approval process for projects located in medical deserts; medical deserts are defined as areas where all counties and cities are designated as primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas with geographic, low income; or high needs geographic areas. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 13.

### **SB 164 – Downcoding **ENACTED****

Introduced by Senator Jeremy McPike (D), SB 164 defines 'downcoding'; prohibits health insurers from downcoding a claim unless the decision is reviewed by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant; the insurer must explain why the claim was downcoded, the

reason for the decision to downcode, and the process to appeal; every health insurer must establish a process for appealing a downcoded claim, including how to initiate an appeal, contact information for the individual managing the appeal, reasonable timelines for the submission of an appeal no less than 180 days after receipt of notice of the downcoded claim, and reasonable timelines for adjudication of the appeal. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 13.

**SB 172** – Insurance **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Stella Pekarsky (D), SB 172 requires health insurers to use electronic attachments for all claims-related documentation and processes; no insurer shall require submission of such documentation by paper, facsimile, or other nonelectronic means if an electronic attachment can be used. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 6.

**SB 212** – Scope of Practice **ENACTED**

Introduced by Senator Jennifer Boysko (D), SB 212 allows Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agent (TPA) certified optometrists to directly sell and dispense Schedule VI controlled substances; optometrists must be present and actively involved during dispensing, inform patients about proper use, and comply with all relevant regulations on storage, packaging, labeling, recordkeeping, and reporting. Governor Abigail Spanberger (D) signed the bill into law April 13.