

October 24, 2018  
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## Update on SmileDirectClub in Arkansas

As reported in the AAO eBulletin, on Thursday, September 13, 2018, SmileDirectClub held a meeting with members of the Arkansas State Board of Dental Examiners to discuss Arkansas' Teledentistry Regulation (AR ADC 038.00.1-XXI). The regulation currently states that an "in person" dental examination creates a proper dentist/patient relationship, and a "dentist/patient relationship must be established before the delivery of services via 'teledentistry.'"

Thanks to the AAO Component Legal Support Fund, the AAO Legal Department learned about the meeting in advance and was able to retain a top tier Arkansas lobbying firm, [Impact Management Group](#), to represent the AAO and its interests.

AAO Attorney Sean Murphy attended the Arkansas State Board of Dental Examiners meeting with the AAO's Arkansas lobbyists and voiced opposition to SmileDirectClub's efforts. Mr. Murphy and the lobbying firm were also able to meet with Arkansas Rep. Deborah Ferguson (a dentist from West Memphis, Arkansas) to discuss the teledentistry regulation.

The AAO Component Legal Support Fund, established by a vote of the 2015 House of Delegates, provides grants to component organizations to assist with state legal and legislative issues that impact orthodontic practices. If your state has a pending legislative or regulatory issue that could use the AAO's help, please reach out to your state's leadership and encourage them to submit a Component Legal Support Fund application.

Please note, every orthodontist (as a citizen of and licensed dental provider in his or her state) and orthodontic patient has the right, independently and individually, to express his or her opinion on any dental issue to his or her state dental board and elected officials. If you feel so compelled, you can contact your state's dental board. Contact information for state dental boards can be found by clicking [here](#).