

Have you ever thought “Why isn’t the AAO doing something about....”? If you have, I will bet that you are not receiving the weekly AAO Bulletin online. Please register with the AAO to receive this bulletin at *your personal email* and stay informed.

COGA held its last meeting in January 2022. COVID 19 restrictions are still in place for DC but we wanted to meet in person for the Professional Advocacy Conference to have a better experience for our members. The Conference will allow for grassroots training of members and other resources that have a state focus. The hope is to bring Members of Congress, their staff and regulators to the hotel to meet with AAO members. The meeting will be held in DC on April 5-6, 2022. Attendees would need to fly in on Tuesday morning and fly out late afternoon on Wednesday. AAO members who have made contributions to the AAOPAC should have received invitations recently. If you would like to attend this conference and have not received an invitation, please contact Kathy DiPrimo at the AAO as soon as possible because space is limited. Please come and learn how to defend and protect our specialty and our patients.

The AAO Board of Trustees has created a Task Force to review and make recommendations to AAOPAC and COGA. Historically, the AAO Advocacy program has concentrated most of its efforts at the Federal Level. While this is still needed, most of our legislative efforts are occurring at a state level. The AAO has footprints in 22 states (active legislation in KS, WA, IL and OH) with legislation and regulation primarily focused on teledentistry. The Advocacy team is engaging with Attorneys General across the country regarding direct-to-consumer issues.

Twenty one Members of Congress signed a letter asking the Governmental Accountability Office to conduct a study of the federal regulation of direct-to-consumer advertising practices for prescription medical products, including orthodontic appliances and the GAO has agreed to conduct a study this summer. The AAO and the Organized Dentistry Coalition supported the Oral Health Literacy and Awareness Act which passed in the House and is moving onto the Senate. The aim of this act is to educate individuals on oral health needs and to seek and obtain routine dental care, including orthodontic treatment.

The AAO Advocacy Team rolled out a new State Advocacy Toolkit at the Winter Conference featuring direct-to-consumer resources. You should also check out [Orthofacts.org](http://Orthofacts.org) for printable information regarding DTC treatment.

Looking forward to seeing some of you in DC!

Valerie Martone