

The Annual Policy survey goes out to AAO members once a year. We use the survey to focus our advocacy priorities on issues that members have ranked in order of importance. Please fill out the survey which comes out every November to January. I find it interesting that for the past 3 public surveys, members ranked advocacy as the number one priority, yet few contribute to the PAC, which is the mechanism for advocacy. GLAO had the highest percentage (3.1%) of contributors from 40 members at \$16,696. Please seriously consider contributing even a small amount. Sorry, this only applies to American Members.

The AAO sent a letter to the FDA regarding patient safety concerns on direct- to-consumer orthodontic treatments. We hoped to get 1,000 members to sign the letter. A significant number of members, 1,400, participated in the letter to the FDA. Thank you to those of you who provided your signature.

The advocacy team is moving forward with our new fellowship opportunity with Dr. Natalia Chalmers, Chief Dental Officer at CMS. The fellowship was created by the AAO to focus on Medicaid coverage and orthodontic benefits across the States.

The Professional Advocacy Conference is scheduled for March 11-12, 2025. We encourage members to contribute to the AAOPAC and attend the conference in DC. Participants get updates on key issues and meet with our Lobby Team, Senators, Congress people, and staff on Capitol Hill. The PAC aims to contribute in a bipartisan giving plan focusing on members in key committees.

The NAN (National Advocacy Network) has many micro-volunteer positions in your state if you are interested in getting involved without being over-burdened. Try it out!

I have the honor of being the Chair of COGA this year and next year. Talk to me about my experience.

Respectfully,

Valerie Martone

COGA Chair