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Fall 2026



About This Newsletter

AACI
Association of American Cancer Institutes

The Association of American Cancer Institutes represents over 100 premier academic and freestanding cancer centers in the United States and Canada.

Amplifying Your Impact in Washington

The AACI *Public Policy Roundup* is a seasonal snapshot of AACI's ongoing public policy and advocacy activities.

This quarterly publication will take the place of **AACI *Commentary*** four times a year to provide a more focused look at the policy issues shaping the oncology field.

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS & SUBSCRIBE

Fall 2026 Policy Priorities

With the 2026 midterm elections now behind us, significant changes are on the horizon in Washington. Democrats will take control of both chambers of Congress in January, bringing new leadership to key committees responsible for federal research funding. As lawmakers navigate the transition, AACI is closely monitoring what these changes could mean for academic cancer centers and the future of federal cancer research.

One immediate priority is the December 11 government funding deadline. Congress must determine whether to finalize Fiscal Year 2027 appropriations during the lame-duck session or extend current funding into the new Congress. AACI continues to advocate for robust, sustained investment in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Cancer Institute, while cultivating relationships with newly elected members of Congress.

AACI is also closely following the White House Office of Management and Budget's proposed changes to federal financial assistance regulations. The current continuing resolution temporarily prohibits implementation of the proposed rule through December 11, but questions remain about whether these protections will be extended.

Meanwhile, developments surrounding the 340B Drug Pricing Program remain a significant concern for cancer centers. AACI continues working with its member institutions to highlight the program's importance in supporting patient access to comprehensive cancer care and engage policymakers on proposed regulatory changes. In early December, a delegation of AACI's 340B Working Group will visit Capitol Hill to meet with congressional offices and

advocate for policies that preserve the program's benefits for patients and cancer centers. Please contact AACI Director of Policy & Government Affairs **Jaren Love** if you're interested in joining the working group.

As the year draws to a close, AACI remains committed to ensuring that the perspectives of academic cancer centers are represented in federal policy discussions.

Recent News

AACI Government Relations Forum Highlights Clinical Trial Innovation, Public Policy Priorities

AACI held its annual Government Relations (GR) Forum in conjunction with the 2026 AACI/CCAF Annual Meeting in Chicago. Government relations representatives from cancer centers across the country gathered to discuss emerging federal policy issues, efforts to strengthen U.S. leadership in biomedical research, and the midterm elections. The forum was led by AACI Government Relations Steering Committee Chair **Catherine Liao**, Duke Cancer Institute.

Four **AACI Sustaining Members**—the **American Association for Cancer Research (AACR)**, **American Society of Clinical Oncology**, **Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association**, and **Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer**—provided updates on their respective federal advocacy priorities and ongoing initiatives to advance cancer research and patient care.

The forum concluded with announcements regarding AACI's GR Steering Committee. **Caroline Powers**, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School, was named vice chair, and AACI welcomed **Jake Jackson**, Moffitt Cancer Center, and **Alessia Daniele Leal**, Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center at Weill Cornell Medicine, as incoming committee members. Jackson and Leal succeed **Alex Krigstein**, UF Health Cancer Institute, and **James Kennedy**, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. AACI looks forward to working with the new steering committee members and thanks Krigstein and Kennedy for their service and contributions to the committee.



Caroline Powers
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Harvard Medical School



Jake Jackson
Moffitt Cancer Center



Alessia Daniele Leal, MBA
Sandra and Edward Meyer Cancer Center at
Weill Cornell Medicine

IN BRIEF: GOVERNMENT RELATIONS FORUM GUESTS







Satish Gopal, MD, MPH

National Cancer Institute
Center for Global Health

Key takeaway: The federal Operation TrialBlazer initiative aims to modernize clinical trial processes, reduce administrative barriers, and accelerate study activation amid a changing global research landscape.

Stephen Ezell

Information Technology and Innovation Foundation

Key takeaway: Investments in scientific talent, financial incentives, and efforts to accelerate drug development have directly contributed to China's rapid growth in biomedical research.

Ross Frommer, JD

Columbia University
Irving Medical Center

Key takeaway: Changes in congressional leadership will affect federal policy across the board, including issues that impact AACI cancer centers.

FEDERAL POLICY & OUTREACH

Rally for Medical Research & Congressional Women's Softball Game

On September 17, participants from nearly 400 organizations came together on Capitol Hill to advocate for robust and sustained annual funding increases for the NIH during the 14th annual **Rally for Medical Research** Hill Day. The previous evening, advocates attended a reception featuring remarks from NIH Director **Jay Bhattacharya, MD, PhD**, Yosemite founder **Reed Jobs**, and Senator **Dick Durbin (D-IL)**.

AACI's Policy & Government Affairs team participated in both events, which AACI was proud to support as a Silver Sponsor. We appreciate the efforts of leaders, clinicians, researchers, and other advocates from AACI member cancer centers who joined us to speak on behalf of patients with cancer. Special thanks to AACR for coordinating the Rally for Medical Research and the reception. ***View Photos From the Rally for Medical Research***

AACI returned to Washington the following week as a sponsor of the **Congressional Women's Softball Game**, held at Audi Field on September 23. Started in 2009 following the breast cancer diagnosis of Representative **Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL)**, the annual event has grown into a bipartisan tradition of friendly competition between members of Congress and the Washington press corps. This year, the press corps' Bad News Babes defeated Team Congress 22–16, and the event raised more than $880,000 for the **Young Survival Coalition**, which supports the unique needs of young adults diagnosed with breast cancer. ***Read More***

AACI Comments on Proposed Changes to 340B Program

In August, AACI submitted comments in response to **Calendar Year 2027 Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System Policy Changes and Payment Rates and Ambulatory Surgical Center Payment System Policy Changes and Payment Rates (CMS-2026-2344)**, proposed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. AACI noted that the proposed rule does not keep pace with sustained increases in operating costs for cancer centers and shared concerns with provisions related to site-neutral payments, 340B reimbursement, and new provider requirements. ***Read More***

POLICY & LEGISLATION UPDATES

*The **AACI Public Policy Resource Library** tracks state legislation and policy developments affecting cancer prevention, treatment, research, and access to care.*

New York Removes Cost Sharing for Follow-Up Lung Cancer Screening

New York **Assembly Bill A1195A** requires comprehensive health insurance policies in the state to cover lung cancer screenings and follow-up diagnostic services in accordance with health care provider recommendations. ***Read More***

Indiana Removes Step Therapy Requirement for Patients With Metastatic and Advanced Cancers

Indiana **House Bill 1114** prohibits state employee health plans and related insurances from requiring patients with advanced or metastatic cancers to try a lower-cost medication before providing coverage for more expensive treatment options. ***Read More***

California Taxpayers Can Now Donate State Tax Refunds to Pediatric Cancer Research

California **Assembly Bill 703** provides a pathway for California taxpayers to channel their state tax return funds specifically toward pediatric cancer research. The state began collecting contributions in January 2026 following the bill's signing in July 2025. ***Read More***

*In addition to following state-level policy developments, AACI monitors the status of cancer-related federal legislation, from introduction to enactment, through its **Federal Legislation Tracker**.*

Upcoming Events

2027 AACI/AACR Hill Day

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, May 20, 2027

Washington, DC

2027 AACI Spring Government Relations Forum

MORE DETAILS COMING SOON

Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Jefferson | Philadelphia, PA

AACI Policy & Government Affairs



Jaren Love, MBA, MPPM
Director of Policy & Government Affairs



Omasan Richardson
Policy & Government Affairs Coordinator

CONTACT US

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