

**OREGON ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS**  
**CONGRESS OF THE MEMBERS**  
75th ANNUAL MEETING  
April 9, 2022

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

*Mission Statement: The OAFP exists to support family physicians in their pursuit of optimal health for the people of Oregon.*

The Commission on External Affairs has met monthly in the interim between legislative sessions and met every week in January and February during the short legislative session.

As a reminder, the Commission is charged with the following:

- Advise and direct staff with prioritizing opportunities for collaboration with external organizations, including task forces, workgroups, and coalitions.
- Review and consider legislation and rulemaking efforts at the state level, and where necessary, at the national level in coordination with the AAFP.
- Help to shape the OAFP legislative agenda and long-term strategy at the direction of the Board.
- Assist members with the drafting and submission of resolutions for the Congress of Members.
- Help to recruit and support additional members to participate in the OAFP Legislative Day at the Capitol.

Of note this year is that after a careful search last summer, we welcomed a new contract lobbyist to the OAFP team. Iris Maria Chavez, founder and principal of Equity Action Partners, started in September to replace our long-time lobbyist Sam Barber when he enrolled in graduate school.

OAFP's most important piece of legislation was HB 4083, the Universal Access to Primary Care bill. After a tortuous path through the legislature, it was added via amendment to a different piece of legislation and finally passed as part of SB 1529. This bill was introduced in the 2021 legislative session but failed to make it out of Committee because of the cost of implementing the legislation among OHP patients who aren't part of CCOs. Key provisions of the bill that survived include:

- Requiring private insurance plans to offer plans with at least 3 primary care visits with zero cost sharing to the patient
- Eliminating double copays for physical health and behavioral health services received on the same day in the same location
- Banning prior authorizations for behavioral health services provided in PCPCH and CCBHC Clinics and,

- Requiring most insurers to attribute patients to a primary care practice (thereby enabling the use of alternative payment methodologies)

OAFP is grateful for the championship of Rep. Rachel Prusak in getting this bill across the finish line. Other notable bills that passed include SB 1554, a priority bill for OAFP past president Senator Steiner Hayward, which directs Oregon Health Authority to study public health system response to COVID-19 pandemic and SB 1555, which removes some barriers to insurance coverage for the universally offered home visits for newborns. Notable healthcare related bills that did not pass include HB 4142, which would have increased penalties for assaulting healthcare staff, and HB 4039, which would have modified how CCOs must allocate resources to address social determinants of health.

A complete end-of-session report is available on the OAFP website under the “Advocacy” menu.

With the advent and spreading availability of vaccines, the commission and OAFP was able to return most of our focus to more familiar issues. The Commission continues to focus on payment reform, universal access to care, incentives to recruit and retain workforce in rural and underserved communities, and provider satisfaction initiatives. While a significant portion of this work in Oregon was delayed or paused due to the pandemic, the workgroups are gearing up again and we expect to place our members in key positions to advocate for the changes and primary care support we want to see.

Members of the Commission met on April 7 for a strategy meeting to improve our chances for success for key initiatives in 2023. We will share those plans through the magazine, and as ever, we welcome your input, participation and support.

We encourage members who want to track our advocacy updates to sign up for the Advocacy Update; during legislative sessions, OAFP staff send these updates weekly with a recap of developments related to key bills of interest to OAFP. Contact Betsy if you’d like to be added to the list.

Respectfully submitted,  
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OAFP Government Affairs