**American Academy of Sleep Medicine Political Action Committee (AASM PAC)**

The mission of the AASM Political Action Committee (PAC) is to support sleep-medicine friendly legislators in their elections. Through bi-partisan political action, sleep patients, specialists, and centers will be opened up to better, high quality care, equipment, and facilities. The AASM PAC is a crucial resource in the fight against sleep diseases and the social implications they cause. By making contributions, the AASM strives to gain access to the ear and influence of key lawmakers around the nation. With a contribution to the AASM PAC, you will be a direct contributor to the advancement of sleep medicine awareness and care.

Through your generosity, the AASM PAC generated $27,205 in contributions during 2014. In 2015, we can take the AASM PAC to even greater heights, but only with your help. Donate today at www.aasmnet.org/members/donate.aspx

### Making Dollars and Sense: The State of Medicare Beneficiaries

As of 2012, the United States was home to 49.4 million Medicare beneficiaries. Just 10 years prior, in 1992, there were just 39.2 million people in the same program, a growth of nearly 20%. By 2050, projections indicate that the population of Medicare beneficiaries will almost double, totaling 92.8 million enrollees.

Today, 20-30% of people enrolled in Medicare remain untreated for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). Through AASM-sponsored legislation, *Seniors Sleep*, we hope to introduce these beneficiaries to the care that they need. By adding a preventative screening for OSA in the Welcome to Medicare program, nearly 10 million new patients would be referred to high-quality care by a board certified sleep physician.

#### Established Relationships

In the 2014 midterm election cycle, the AASM PAC contributed to 24 U.S. House of Representatives campaigns as well as seven U.S. Senate races.

Of the 31 total, bi-partisan campaigns in which the AASM PAC contributed, 30 of the carefully targeted sleep-friendly legislators were elected to office as of January, 6th 2015.

From the multiple Congressional sponsors committed to *Seniors Sleep*, to fruitful coalitions with health-positive professional societies such as the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS), the AASM strives to build an influential legislative voice to put physicians and patients first.

#### A Time for Action

The election of 2014 brought a shift in power, leaving both the House of Representatives and Senate in Republican control. Along, with a Democrat-led White House, health care will surely be a hotter topic than ever leading up to the 2016 election.

That means the time for action is now. The 114th Congress is just six months into its term; both freshmen and veteran lawmakers are looking to make their mark through legislation. Together, let’s make sure “sleep” is in the conversation for the year ahead.

**While the Medicare population will only grow; together we can make the untreated population shrink.** For the health of the untreated, and the health of the sleep medicine field, contact your congressman or senator about Seniors Sleep today! Unsure of who your Representative and Senators are? Go to [http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/](http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/) and [http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/](http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/) to find your lawmakers!
Seniors Sleep | The Seniors Sleep bill (H.R. 4695) is a solution to the 20-30% of Medicare beneficiaries who remain untreated for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

Seniors Sleep will add a preventative sleep screening to the Welcome to Medicare benefit. Welcome to Medicare allows for a preventative screening and examination without a copayment. Screenings for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other medical problems are included in Welcome to Medicare; Seniors Sleep would add an OSA screening to the package.

Beyond its medical benefits, Seniors Sleep is a fiscally responsible measure for the American patient. Untreated, an OSA patient will pay an average of $1,336 more in annual medical costs than a patient treated by a board-certified physician.

A substantially large portion of Americans are susceptible to OSA. The population that OSA affects is diverse, which can make the fight against the disease a worthy cause for many different legislatures serving many different constituents.

Societal Impacts | In 2015, the AASM will not only target advocacy and educational efforts that seek to aid the sleep medicine practice. This year the AASM will seek out action that will also aid in the impact that OSA, insomnia, narcolepsy, and other sleep diseases have on society as a whole. In addition to keeping the nation healthy, by providing a pathway to top-quality care, the AASM strives to create peace of mind by curbing sleep diseases and their dangerous side effects.

Healthcare Trends | 2015 will be an exciting year for sleep medicine. In the coming year, expect sleep medicine to be more digital than ever. Imagine health records that seamlessly bridge gaps between practices and doctors. Think of telemedicine and the possibility of bringing care to rural patients with limited access to sleep centers. Envision new payment models that focus on quality.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is bringing a patient-first focus to medicine. To find more about the ACA and our efforts to secure sleep provisions in State Exchange plans, visit www.aasmnet.org/affordablecareact.aspx.

Through legislative efforts, advocacy, and education, the AASM will make sure that you can bring 21st century care to 21st century sleep patients.

2015 AASM Advocacy Toolkit | Contacting congress can be overwhelming. To aid physicians, the AASM has released a toolkit for contacting and meeting legislators. The toolkit will make contacting lawmakers easy, providing tips for your advocacy efforts. Find the toolkit on the AASM website at www.aasmnet.org/legislation.aspx.

Contact AASM | The AASM has a government relations team working for your benefit. For any questions, please contact Ted Thurn, the AASM’s Senior Health Policy and Government Affairs Analyst, by email at Tthurn@aasmnet.org or by phone at (630) 737-9700.