



# GRASSROOTS TOOLKIT







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# INTRODUCTION

Grassroots advocacy involves educating and influencing public officials to promote and advance legislative priorities. Rather than relying on professional lobbyists or staff, this effort is driven by members of a peer group working together toward shared advocacy goals.

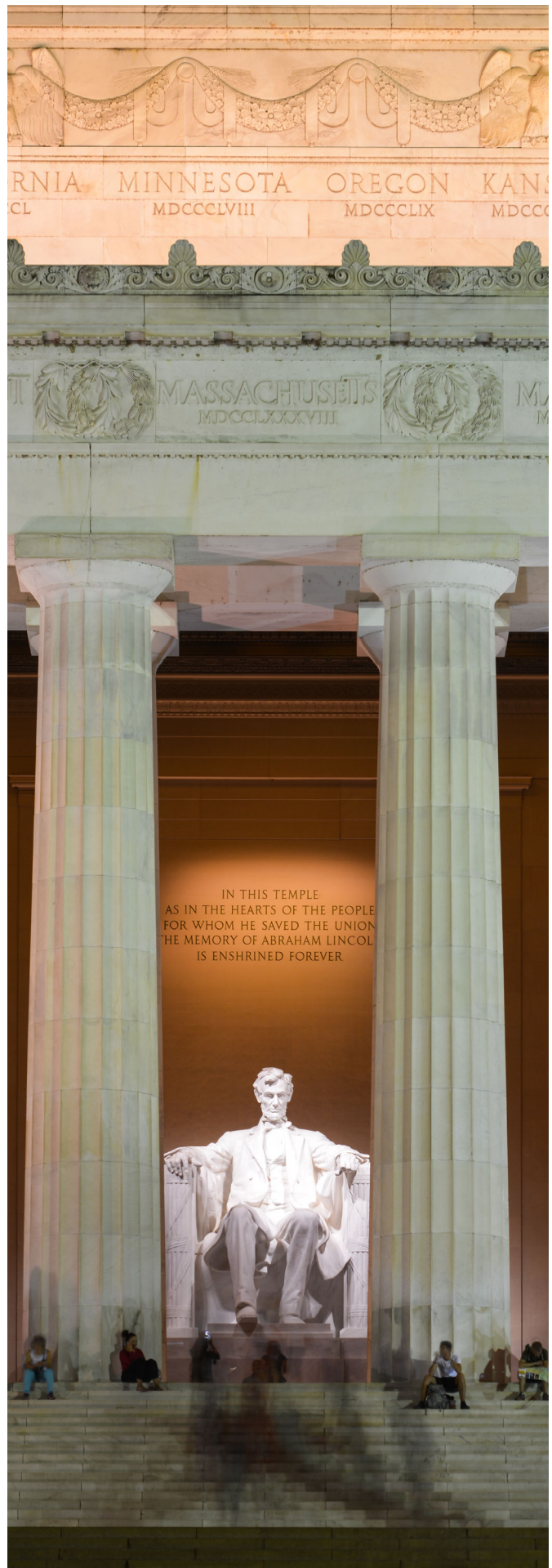
AAOMS conducts a wide range of grassroots activities. These include enabling AAOMS members to contact their members of Congress about key specialty issues and collaborating with OMSPAC to establish key contacts and build relationships with legislators.

To further these efforts, AAOMS established the OMS Action Network— a program created to increase awareness of federal grassroots initiatives, strengthen advocacy impact and expand efforts through new initiatives. These include developing a structure to support oral and maxillofacial surgeons interested in pursuing elected office.

The influence of the AAOMS membership on key decision-makers at the state and national levels directly affects the future of the specialty. Legislators shape policies that impact OMS practices, hospitals, educational institutions, research facilities and the patients served. Delivering effective messages to elected officials while raising the profile of the specialty remains essential.

Although AAOMS maintains a strong advocacy presence in Washington, D.C., the OMS Action Network enhances grassroots activities at the local level. Local advocacy plays a vital role in strengthening the association's visibility among legislators by fostering connections with elected officials both as constituents and healthcare professionals. These interactions help build relationships that enhance the effectiveness of advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill.

This OMS Action Network toolkit offers a variety of resources to support OMSs in becoming part of a cohesive group of advocates working under a unified brand.



# ADVOCACY FAQs

## Is grassroots advocacy effective?

Yes. Although the federal legislative process can be slow, grassroots advocacy remains the most effective method to advance legislative goals. Thousands of bills are introduced each session, but only a few become law and often it takes years to build sufficient support to move a bill forward.

Participation in grassroots activities enables AAOMS to effectively communicate the specialty's priorities to key members of Congress.

## Is prior political knowledge required to participate?

No. AAOMS staff provide all necessary political and policy background information to support advocacy efforts.

## My legislators have not supported AAOMS positions in the past. Should I still reach out?

Yes. AAOMS encourages engagement with local legislators even if agreement on all priorities is lacking. Common ground may exist. If a notably negative experience has occurred with a legislator or their staff, AAOMS staff can be contacted for guidance.

## My legislator belongs to a political party I do not support. Why should I engage them?

When advocating through AAOMS, the focus is on representing the specialty, not any political party. Even with differing political views, legislators may support key AAOMS priorities. Meetings should only be accepted when comfortable, but bipartisan advocacy is vital. Political control can shift with every election cycle, so relationships on both sides of the aisle are important.

## I'm interested in advocacy but nervous about attending meetings alone. Are there other OMSs in my area active in grassroots efforts?

Typically – yes. AAOMS encourages new advocates to connect with experienced colleagues. If unaware of active advocates in a particular state, AAOMS governmental affairs staff can provide a list of experienced advocates willing to offer support and insight.

## Advocacy do's and don'ts



### Do

- Be respectful and professional in all interactions.
- Keep messages brief and focused on 1–2 key points.
- Share accurate, current info and answer questions clearly.
- Use real-life examples to show policy impact.
- Note your status as a constituent, if applicable.
- Follow up with thank-yous and offer expertise.
- Stay nonpartisan and build cross-party relationships.
- Align with AAOMS/state OMS societies on priorities.
- Follow all laws on lobbying and nonprofit activity.
- Stay involved year-round to build and maintain relationships.



### Helpful tips



### Don't

- Use partisan framing or assumptions about politics.
- Use jargon or medical terminology.
- Lie, mislead or promote information as fact without being certain of accuracy.
- Be unprofessional, argumentative or overly emotional.
- Threaten or make hostile demands.
- Assume lawmakers understand OMS training.
- Deviate from core advocacy messages.
- Rely on others to advocate.



# GOVERNMENT BASICS

## Federal government

The United States federal government is the national government of the United States, established by the Constitution in 1789. It is composed of three distinct branches, each with specific powers and responsibilities designed to ensure a system of checks and balances:

### Legislative branch (Congress)

**Main Role:** Makes laws

**Components:** The Senate (100 members, 2 per state) and the House of Representatives (435 members based on population)

**Powers:** Approves the federal budget, declares war, regulates interstate commerce and confirms presidential appointments (Senate)

### Executive branch

**Main Role:** Enforces laws

**Key Figures:** The President, Vice President and federal agencies

**Powers:** Leads the military, negotiates treaties, signs or vetoes legislation and appoints federal officials

### Judicial branch

**Main Role:** Interprets laws

**Key Body:** The Supreme Court, along with lower federal courts

**Powers:** Reviews laws and executive actions for constitutionality, resolves disputes under federal law

## Checks and balances

Each branch can limit the powers of the others. This prevents any one branch from becoming too powerful and helps maintain democratic governance.

## Federalism

Power is shared between the federal government and state governments. While the federal government handles national issues like defense and foreign policy, states manage areas such as education, public safety and infrastructure.

## Examples of OMS issues addressed by federal government

- DEA policy
- ERISA reform
- FDA and CDC requirements
- Federal student loan policy
- Medicaid (funding and baseline requirements)
- Medicare (all aspects)
- U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs policy



# State government

Each state in the U.S. has its own government, structured similarly to the federal government, with three separate branches and a system of checks and balances. While specifics vary by state, most operate under the same core principles.

## Legislative branch (Legislature, General Assembly or General Court)

**Main Role:** Creates state laws

**Structure:** Most states have a bicameral legislature— typically called the Senate (upper chamber) and House of Representatives or Assembly (lower chamber)

**Powers:** Passes state laws, approves the state budget and oversees state agencies and programs

## Executive branch

**Main Role:** Implements and enforces state laws

**Key Figures:** Governor (chief executive), Lieutenant Governor and other elected officials (e.g., Attorney General, Secretary of State)

**Powers:** Signs or vetoes bills, proposes a state budget, appoints agency heads and oversees state agencies

## Judicial branch

**Main Role:** Interprets state laws and resolves legal disputes

**Structure:** State Supreme Court and lower state courts (such as appellate and trial courts)

**Powers:** Reviews the legality of state laws and executive actions, hears civil and criminal cases

## State vs. local authority

States grant authority to counties, cities and towns to manage local affairs, including schools, zoning, police and transportation. Local governments operate under rules set by the state.

## Unique Features

- Every state has its own constitution
- Terms of office, election cycles and titles may vary
- Some states allow ballot initiatives or referendums for voters to directly shape laws

## Examples of OMS issues addressed by state government

- Anesthesia
- Insurance policy and coverage requirements
- Liability
- Licensure
- Medicaid (operations and coverage structure)
- Scope of practice



Learn more at  
[AAOMS.org/Gov101](https://AAOMS.org/Gov101)

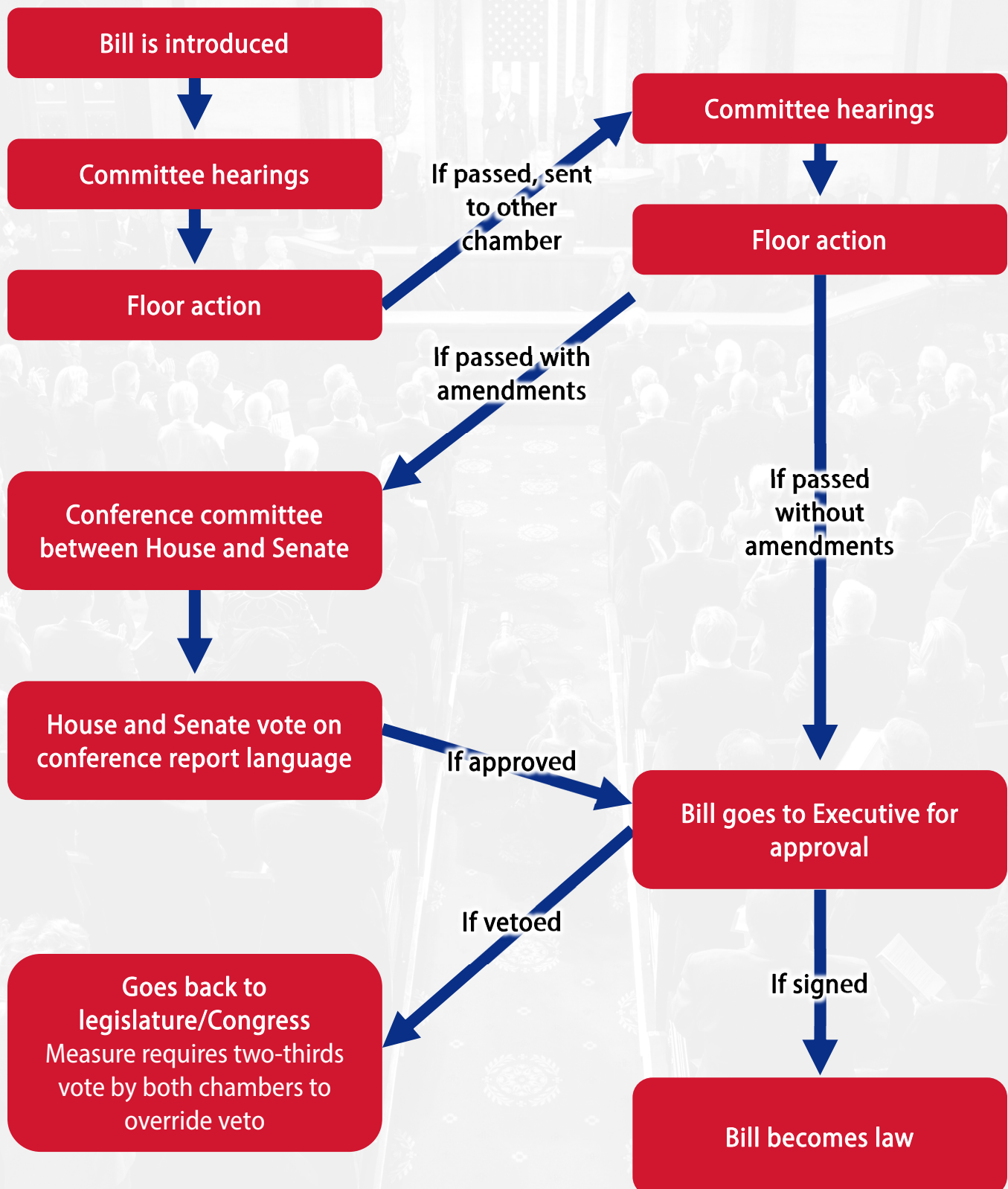




# The legislative process

The chart below outlines the general process by which a bill becomes law. Legislation seldom follows this path exactly on its way to the president or governor's desk, but the chart

highlights the key steps and hurdles that must typically be navigated before a bill is enacted. The process for state and federal legislation is typically very similar.





# WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

## AAOMS advocacy campaigns

Through the OMS Action Network section of the Advocacy webpage on AAOMS.org, members can participate in various advocacy campaigns. Using VoterVoice software, participants can easily contact members of Congress via email about AAOMS legislative priorities. These campaigns are designed to be user friendly and provide the tools needed to reach the appropriate legislators.

Some campaigns remain active throughout the legislative session, such as those focused on building support for AAOMS-endorsed bills. Others are more urgent and require immediate attention. In those cases, an advocacy alert email is distributed to all members, directing them to the Take Action section highlighting the campaign. Once on the OMS Grassroots Action Center page, members have the option to personalize the prewritten message. After entering an address, the message is automatically routed to the correct legislator and sent with a single click.



Take action now at  
[AAOMS.org/TakeAction](https://AAOMS.org/TakeAction)



## Text message updates

Make sure to stay informed and ready to act when needed. Sign up for AAOMS advocacy text messages by texting "AAOMS" to 50457. The Association will notify members when action is needed to support the specialty and its patients. Message and data rates may apply; available to U.S. mobile users only.



Sign up now by texting  
**AAOMS to 50457**

## Connect via social media

Social media offers a direct, visible way to connect with legislators and their staff. Follow legislators on platforms like X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date with their priorities and activities. Interact with their posts by commenting, liking or sharing. Tagging legislators in posts helps ensure messages are seen and may prompt a response. When posting, keep messages clear and focused. Mention the issue, the legislator's name and any connections to their district, when applicable. When possible, attaching photos from events, visits and in the office settings can make posts more personal and impactful. Using hashtags such as #OMSAdvocacy, #DayontheHill and issue-specific hashtags connects messages to broader advocacy efforts and helps amplify the voice of the specialty.



### Sample social media post



**John Smith, DDS**  
@DrSmith

Thank you @RepSmith, for meeting with me today to discuss #drugshortages and how these shortages hinder access to care. As a constituent, I appreciate your leadership on this issue and your understanding of how it affects OMS patients in our community.  
#OMSAdvocacy



# Meet with a legislator

Engaging with members of Congress or legislators – either in Washington, D.C., the state capital or locally – allows members to have their voices heard on key issues, building relationships with lawmakers and underscoring the importance of OMS in healthcare.

## Request a local meeting or site visit

Meeting with a legislator locally provides a valuable opportunity to advocate for the specialty without the need for travel.

Local meetings enable an OMS to build a stronger connection as both a constituent and healthcare provider. Unlike while meeting in D.C. or the state capitol, legislators' schedules in their districts are less likely to be disrupted by last-minute votes.

These local meetings should complement ongoing efforts to advance AAOMS's legislative agenda. It is important to become familiar with AAOMS priorities and talking points and to include these topics in the meeting request.

### Step 1: Identify the legislators

Official federal websites provide assistance in locating U.S. Senators and Representatives. Senate.gov lists senators along with links to their official sites, where local office contact information is typically found at the bottom of the page or under a "Contact Me" tab.

House.gov offers a "Find Your Representative" tool that uses zip codes to identify the appropriate representative. If the full zip code is unknown, entering the first five digits will prompt additional steps to retrieve complete information. Representative websites usually include local office contact details near the page footer or under "Contact Me."

State government websites have similar functionality.

If the meeting involves fundraising or picking up a PAC contribution, coordination must occur through the member's campaign office rather than the district office. Campaign websites with contact information are generally accessible via online searches. AAOMS governmental affairs staff are available to provide assistance if needed.

### Step 2: Submit a meeting request

Most legislators now require meeting requests to be submitted through official local office web forms, typically accessible under "Contact" or "Request a Meeting" on their websites. The request should include contact information, preferred dates and times and a brief summary of topics to be discussed.

### Step 3: Follow up with the congressional office

After submitting the request online, follow-up contact with the legislator's local scheduler approximately one week later is recommended to confirm receipt and check the status. The



## Sample meeting request

Month X, 20XX

The Honorable <first and last name>  
<local office address>  
<city>, <state> <zip>

Dear <Congressman or Senator\_last name>:  
I am an oral and maxillofacial surgeon and a constituent, currently practicing/residing in <practice/residence town included in congressional district.>

I would like to request an appointment for myself <and – number- of local colleagues> to meet with you and your healthcare aide to discuss some significant policy issues affecting how oral and maxillofacial surgeons in your <district or state> are able to provide care to patients and your constituents. [I would like to request a meeting between <time slot> on <date> at <your local office located in <town>.] OR [I would like to invite you to tour my <practice/hospital> between <time slot> on <date> in <town>.]

Specifically, we are seeking support <insert AAOMS priority legislation in paragraph form here with short descriptions>.

Thank you, <Congressman/Congresswoman/ Senator\_Last name>, for your consideration of this request. I will follow up with your scheduler to confirm an appointment. If your office would prefer to contact me sooner, I can be reached at <your area code and phone number/ email address>.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you and to discuss the legislative priorities of the specialty.

Sincerely,  
<your name>  
<your street address>  
<your city, state, zip>  
<your phone number>  
<your email>

scheduler may request additional information or a resubmission through the appropriate channel.

It is important to recognize that legislators maintain very busy calendars, even in their districts. Meeting requests should be submitted at least six to eight weeks in advance and flexibility with scheduling is advised. Scheduling meetings during congressional recess periods can improve the likelihood of availability.



# Successful meetings



Securing a meeting with a legislator or appropriate staff presents an important opportunity to educate and advocate for the specialty, while establishing the foundation for a long-term relationship. The following tips and reminders can help ensure a productive meeting:

## **Tip 1: Be prompt and patient**

Plan to arrive about ten minutes early. However, it is common for legislators to run late or have meetings interrupted by urgent matters in a busy schedule. Flexibility is essential if interruptions occur.

It is not unusual to meet with a member's staff rather than the legislator personally. Some legislators rely heavily on their staff to engage with constituents and to understand key issues. Staff often possess detailed knowledge of the matters at hand and building relationships with them can be equally valuable.

## **Tip 2: Be prepared**

A clear agenda and a concise list of "asks" for the legislative office are important. Legislators and staff spend many hours in meetings, so making a positive impression with clear requests helps differentiate advocacy efforts.

Bringing leave-behind materials that outline the basics of oral and maxillofacial surgery and the association's legislative priorities is recommended. Such materials are provided at Day on the Hill events; for local meetings, contacting AAOMS governmental affairs staff to request these materials is advised.

Expertise on every issue is not required, but comfort discussing the basics is important. If a question cannot be answered during the meeting, it is appropriate to respond, "I do not know, but will find out and follow up." This approach can help build rapport with legislative staff.

Familiarity with basic facts about the legislators – including political party, leadership roles, committee assignments and career background – also proves helpful.

## **Tip 3: Make the constituent connection**

Legislators place great weight on input from those they represent. Establishing a personal connection with the legislator or staff member is key.

Since legislators serve the interests of their district or state, demonstrating how the issues discussed align with the member's constituency strengthens advocacy efforts. Many patients served by oral and maxillofacial surgeons are constituents as well.

## **Tip 4: Stay on message**

With limited time available, it is crucial to focus on key topics and talking points. Legislative requests should be clear and concise.

Assuming staff are already familiar with OMS should be avoided. Briefly introducing the specialty – without becoming overly technical – is an opportunity to promote oral and maxillofacial surgery. Such explanations should last no longer than one or two minutes.

If disagreement with AAOMS's position becomes apparent, it is best to move on to other topics. If the legislator or staff expresses willingness to "look into it," offering AAOMS and personal availability as resources encourages follow-up communications.

Endorsements of legislation or issues should not be offered on behalf of AAOMS or a state society, as only the AAOMS or state society president is authorized to speak officially for the association.

## **Tip 5: Avoid campaign talk**

Meetings in official legislative offices, whether local, in a state capitol or in Washington, D.C., should remain focused on policy rather than politics. Mentioning upcoming elections or fundraisers in such settings is inappropriate and should be reserved for campaign events.

## **Tip 6: Dress appropriately**

Business attire is recommended. When uncertain, erring on the side of formality is advised.

## **Tip 7: Follow up**

Collect the names and business cards of all staff members met during the visit to ensure accurate follow-up communication. These contacts often serve as the main points of liaison after the meeting.

Sharing any OMS-related information discussed with AAOMS and the state society supports ongoing lobbying efforts.

## Successful site visits

Scheduling a tour of a practice or hospital, similar to securing a meeting in a legislator's local office, offers an excellent opportunity to educate and advocate for the specialty while laying the foundation for a long-term relationship.

### Tip 1: Clarify site visit itinerary beforehand

Site visits may include various activities such as a facility tour, observation of a procedure, or a simple meet and greet. Confirming the planned activities in advance is important and the total visit should be kept under one hour unless otherwise approved by the legislator's staff.

### Tip 2: Be prepared

Although a site visit tends to be less formal than a sit-down meeting, having a clear plan for discussion topics and a list of "asks" for the congressional office remains essential. Given the demanding schedules of legislators and their staff, making a positive impression through clear, focused requests is critical. Having materials on hand that outline the basics of oral and maxillofacial surgery and the association's legislative priorities is recommended. These materials are provided onsite during Day on the Hill events; for local meetings, contacting AAOMS governmental affairs staff to request meeting materials is advised.

Consider arranging an informal gathering before or after the tour, providing an opportunity for practice staff to interact with the legislator, ask questions and share information about the practice. Options include a coffee break, breakfast, or turning the visit into a fundraiser. If planning a fundraiser, this must be determined before starting as specific legal planning steps are required.



## Helpful tips

### Tip 3: Make the constituent connection

Legislators place great importance on input from those they represent. Establishing a personal connection with the legislator or staff member is crucial.

Highlight the beneficial impact the practice has on the community, including patient volume, types of procedures performed and how federal legislation and regulations affect practice operations.

### Tip 4: Avoid campaign talk

Discussions during official site visits should focus on policy, not politics. Mentioning upcoming elections or fundraising is inappropriate unless the visit is part of a fundraiser.

### Tip 5: Follow up

Collect the names and business cards of all staff encountered during the visit to enable accurate follow-up communication. These contacts often serve as primary points of liaison after the visit.

If specific OMS issues were discussed with the legislator or staff, sharing this information with AAOMS and the state society supports ongoing lobbying efforts.



## Remember!

No matter the activity or interaction, circle back with AAOMS governmental affairs or the state OMS society to report any discussion or information that may be helpful in ongoing advocacy efforts. Every detail helps strengthen the collective message.

## Invite a legislator to speak

Members of Congress are invited to speak at numerous events each year, especially within their districts. Speaking engagements before a large group of constituents offer legislators an effective way to reach many voters at once. Such an event can also add distinction to official gatherings like OMS state society or state PAC Board meetings.

While AAOMS invites legislators to speak at Day on the Hill meetings, hosting a member at a local meeting creates an excellent opportunity for OMSs new to advocacy to engage directly and hear in depth from a federal official on issues affecting the specialty.

### Step 1: Identify your legislators

Official federal websites provide resources to locate and contact your U.S. Senators and Representatives. Visit Senate.gov to find senators' official websites, where contact information for their local offices is typically listed at the bottom or under a "Contact Me" tab.

To find your U.S. Representative, visit House.gov and use the "Find Your Representative" tool by entering your zip code. If unsure of the full zip code, enter the first five digits and follow prompts to retrieve the complete code. The tool will then link to your representative's official site, with local office contact information similarly located.

If the legislator's participation involves fundraising or picking up a PAC contribution, coordinate with the campaign office rather than the district office. Campaign contact information is usually available on their website or can be obtained through a web search. The AAOMS governmental affairs staff can provide assistance if needed.

### Step 2: Submit a speaking engagement request

Legislators now require speaking requests to be submitted through their official web forms, which are typically found on their local office websites under "Contact" or "Request to Speak." The request should include your contact information, event dates and times, a brief description of the meeting format and suggested topics for the remarks.

### Step 3: Follow up with the congressional office

After submitting the request via the web form, allow about a week before contacting the legislator's local scheduler to confirm receipt and check the status. The scheduler may ask for additional details or request that the submission be resent through the proper channels.

Keep in mind that senators and representatives maintain very busy schedules, even in their districts. It is recommended to submit speaking requests at least six to eight weeks in advance and remain flexible regarding scheduling to accommodate the legislator's availability.



## Sample speaking request

Month X, 20XX

The Honorable <first and last name>  
<local office address>  
<city>, <state> <zip>

Dear <Congressman or Senator\_last name>:

On behalf of the <group name>, I would like to invite you to be the keynote speaker at our upcoming meeting at <venue> in <location>. We would love to hear from you at any point between <time slot> on <date>.

The <group/meeting name> is held annually and provides an opportunity for the <number of OMS> oral and maxillofacial surgeons in the region to meet and discuss issues that are important to the specialty. Specifically, we would love to hear from you on <issues i.e. tort reform or craniofacial anomalies>

We hope your schedule will permit you to join us for our upcoming meeting. Please contact <contact name, phone number email>, with any questions or to advise us of your attendance.

Sincerely,  
<your name>  
<your street address>  
<your city, state, zip>  
<your phone number>  
<your email>



## Join a healthcare advisory committee

Members of Congress often seek input from local leaders when evaluating how federal legislation may impact their constituents. Many legislators maintain advisory committees focused on areas such as small business, education, the environment and healthcare. As a practicing oral and maxillofacial surgeon, clinical experience can serve as a valuable resource when healthcare policy is under consideration.

To explore participation, contact the local district office to ask whether a healthcare advisory panel exists and express interest in joining. It may be helpful to inquire about the group's level of activity and composition. This topic can also be raised during meetings with congressional staff on Capitol Hill. If a panel is in place, D.C. staff may be able to provide the appropriate local contact for follow-up.

Serving on an advisory committee offers ongoing opportunities to engage with legislators and their staff in an official capacity, helping to establish a strong relationship that may prove useful when future advocacy needs arise.

## Attend a local town hall meeting

Town hall or community meetings offer an effective way to engage with elected officials and their staff. These events are held to provide legislators an opportunity to hear directly from constituents and are typically scheduled during district work periods, also known as congressional recesses.

Town halls are a practical entry point for those new to grassroots advocacy. They are often promoted through local newspapers or on a legislator's website. While some town halls focus on specific topics, others are open forums that allow for broader discussion and direct interaction with attendees.

Before attending, consider reviewing the legislator's committee assignments and sponsored legislation. The AAOMS governmental affairs team is also available to assist with preparing questions relevant to the specialty.

Even without asking a question during the meeting, it is beneficial to introduce yourself to the legislator and staff. Identifying as a constituent and oral and maxillofacial surgeon helps build recognition and can strengthen future advocacy efforts by referencing previous local engagement.

## Send thank you notes

Sending a thank-you note after a meeting expresses appreciation and briefly reiterates the issues discussed, along with the desired response (e.g., co-sponsorship of a bill). A template thank-you letter is provided for reference.



### Sample thank you

Month X, 20XX

The Honorable <first and last name>  
United States <House of Representatives or Senate>  
Washington, DC <20515 if House, 20510 if Senate>

Dear <Congressman or Senator\_last name/  
Congressional Staffer>:

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for taking the time out of your busy schedule to meet with me on <date> at <location>.

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is a dental specialty that straddles both dentistry and medicine and as such has a unique set of legislative priorities. It is important to our specialty to advocate for measures that focus on providing better patient care.

I hope we can count on your support for the following AAOMS legislative priorities<insert below brief description of each issue discussed>:

- Issue 1
- Issue 2
- Issue 3

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions on these issues or other topics relating to oral and maxillofacial surgery.

Once again, thank you for your time and attention and your service to our country.

Sincerely,  
<your name>  
<your street address>  
<your city, state, zip>  
<your phone number>  
<your email>

## Serve as a key contact

Becoming a key contact for a member of Congress through the Capitol Contact Campaign is one of the most effective ways OMSs can advocate for the specialty and for patients. Legislators are more likely to consider the real-world impact of policy decisions when they hear directly from trusted professionals in their districts. A strong, ongoing relationship with a constituent can turn a name on a policy brief into a credible go-to resource when health legislation is being considered.

Serving as a key contact involves more than responding to occasional action alerts. It means proactively building rapport with a legislator and staff through in-person meetings, phone calls or attendance at local events. By sharing personal stories and explaining how proposed policies affect patient care, reimbursement or surgical practice, key contacts help bridge the gap between complex legislation and its real-life consequences.

Key contacts also serve as conduits between AAOMS and Capitol Hill. When timely action is needed, key contacts can help deliver messages with urgency and authenticity that mass emails or form letters cannot replicate. Because these relationships are built over time, key contacts are often in a better position to secure meetings, influence decisions and ensure OMS perspectives are part of the legislative conversation.

AAOMS supports key contacts with resources, training and timely updates to help them remain informed and effective. No prior advocacy experience is required – only a willingness to engage and a commitment to advancing the specialty. Serving as a key contact is a powerful way to help protect and shape the future of patient care.



Sign up at  
[AAOMS.org/Relationship](https://AAOMS.org/Relationship)



## Be an effective key contact

The following tips outline how to build and maintain an effective relationship as a key contact.

### Tip 1: Participate in Day on the Hill and meet locally with the legislator

Making the initial connection through a congressional meeting is fundamental. Maintaining a presence in both Washington, D.C. and the home state strengthens recognition with both district and Washington staff.

Attendance at town hall meetings and public events hosted by the legislator provides additional opportunities to reintroduce and reconnect with local staff and the legislator.

### Tip 2: Utilize contact information to follow up

Following a congressional meeting, prompt follow-up within one week via a brief thank-you email to the appropriate staff member is advised. Offering future assistance reinforces the relationship.



## Helpful tips

### Tip 3: Offer expertise

Volunteering as a local resource can be valuable. Many legislators maintain healthcare advisory groups or expert panels for legislative input, often informal and infrequent in meeting.

### Tip 4: Engage in OMSPAC activities

Participation in OMSPAC activities, such as delivering contributions or hosting fundraisers, provides additional opportunities to build relationships with key decision-makers on Capitol Hill.

### Tip 5: Repeat and reinforce

Maintaining the relationship requires consistent participation in advocacy and OMSPAC activities throughout the legislator's tenure.

# OMSPAC

## FAQs

### What is OMSPAC?

OMSPAC is consistently ranked among the top 25 health professional political action committees contributing to federal candidates. It emphasizes delivering contributions through local OMSs when possible rather than relying solely on Washington, D.C. representation. Although all AAOMS members benefit from its efforts, only about 20 percent participate. Broader involvement is essential to strengthen OMSPAC's impact on federal policy.

### What is a Political Action Committee (PAC)?

A PAC enables individuals with shared interests to combine resources and support federal candidates who align with their priorities. OMSPAC amplifies the collective political voice of the specialty through this coordinated support.

### Why does AAOMS need OMSPAC?

The legislative landscape is constantly changing and requires ongoing engagement with elected officials. OMSPAC helps communicate how federal policies affect patients and the specialty. Its mission is to support candidates who understand the unique role of OMSs in the healthcare system and ensure the specialty is heard among more than 4,000 federal PACs.

### How are contributions to candidates determined?

OMSPAC is non-partisan. The Board evaluates candidates based on issue alignment, relevant committee or leadership positions and established relationships with OMSs. Support is provided only to candidates who back the specialty.



## OMSPAC check delivery do's and don'ts



### Do

- Be familiar with the candidate. Learn basic background facts – both political and personal.
- Treat campaign staff courteously.
- Use personal experiences and community stories to effectively illustrate points.
- Establish an ongoing relationship to build influence as a constituent.
- Leave contact information to stay updated on the campaign's progress.
- Dress appropriately, following any event guidelines. When unsure, choose business attire.
- Take a photo with the candidate and send it to OMSPAC for use in publications and on the website.
- Return your Contribution Delivery Questionnaire to OMSPAC to ensure proper follow-up.
- Promote AAOMS priorities using approved talking points



### Helpful tips



### Don't

- Ask for commitments on legislative issues. This is illegal.
- Deliver checks on federal property, including congressional or district offices.
- Link campaign contributions directly to legislative support (e.g., "This check is in appreciation of your support for H.R. XXX."). This is strictly prohibited.
- Delay delivering contribution checks, as discrepancies in reporting periods can cause serious legal issues for OMSPAC.
- Use medical jargon.
- Endorse candidates on behalf of OMSPAC or promise future contributions. OMSPAC does not endorse candidates; all contributions must be approved by the OMSPAC Board.



# Requesting/delivering OMSPAC funds

## How to request an OMSPAC contribution

To request a contribution, contact OMSPAC staff and submit a contribution request form available at [OMSPAC.org/candidate-central](https://OMSPAC.org/candidate-central). The form collects information including the candidate's name, party affiliation, your relationship to the candidate, the requested amount and the rationale for support. Requests are reviewed by the OMSPAC Board.

## How to Deliver an OMSPAC Contribution

Delivering contributions offers valuable face time with legislators in informal settings such as fundraisers, campaign offices, one-on-one meetings, or even visits to a practice.

OMSPAC staff may also request assistance in delivering pre-approved contributions to legislators in your area.

Begin by contacting the legislator's campaign staff (not official government offices); OMSPAC staff can provide contact details. Identify as a constituent OMS delivering an OMSPAC contribution and request a meeting to present the funds. OMSPAC staff can assist with coordination.

After scheduling, contact OMSPAC to arrange shipment of the contribution check, which will be sent with meeting materials including an evaluation form and tips for a productive meeting.



Learn more at  
[OMSPAC.org](https://OMSPAC.org)

## Hosting a fundraiser

Hosting a fundraiser for a candidate is one of the most effective ways to build a strong relationship and become a key political player in the district or state.

### Tip #1: Legal considerations

Federal Election Law allows individuals to spend up to \$1,000 (\$2,000 for spouses) on invitations, food and beverages when hosting a fundraiser at home without these costs counting as campaign contributions. This limit applies per election, allowing separate fundraisers for primary and general elections. These expenditures do not count toward the individual contribution limit of \$3,300 per candidate per election.

Never use office letterhead for event mailings, as it is considered a corporate good and prohibited by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) for campaign use. Likewise, office staff may not prepare mailings during work hours, but may assist outside office hours or as event volunteers.

### Tip #2: Candidate considerations

To maximize fundraiser effectiveness, confirm the candidate's position on key healthcare issues and committee assignments by contacting AAOMS governmental affairs staff. Also, consult OMSPAC staff to learn about any prior contributions to the candidate or other contenders. While support for OMSPAC-backed candidates is encouraged, all activities should be communicated to staff to leverage available resources and insight.



## Helpful tips

### Tip #3: Scheduling and logistics

Coordinate with the candidate's campaign staff to set a date, time and format for the event, ensuring the candidate's personal attendance. Confirm details in writing and allow sufficient preparation time based on event type. Event options include informal coffees, cocktail receptions, or dinners. The choice may depend on the candidate's schedule and fundraising goals, with receptions accommodating more guests at a lower ticket price and dinners offering a more intimate setting with higher contribution levels.

### Tip #4: Fundraising expectations

Set realistic fundraising goals based on event type, office sought, incumbency and leadership roles. It is better to under-promise and over-deliver than the opposite, as under-delivering risks credibility and future relationships.

Developing tiered contribution levels encourages higher giving. For federal events with ticket prices exceeding \$50 per person, reply cards must comply with federal reporting rules. Campaign staff can assist in ensuring compliance.

### Tip #5: Reaching out to the community

Forming a steering committee from OMS colleagues, friends, neighbors and local political activists improves ticket sales and attendance. Larger committees increase the likelihood of successful turnout.

# GET INVOLVED WITH AAOMS PROGRAMS

## OMS Action Network

Becoming a member of the OMS Action Network is simple, with two pathways available. OMSs can either become a member in conjunction with their role as an OMS leader in a key position or complete one of eight advocacy activities in a calendar year. All OMS Action Network members receive the Advocacy Insider, which provides information on advocacy issues most important to the specialty. No matter which pathway is chosen, all OMS Action Network members strengthen the specialty's collective voice and advance the cause of the profession.



Learn more at  
[AAOMS.org/Action](https://AAOMS.org/Action)

### Most time commitment

Serves as a key contact in the Capitol Contact Campaign for a member of Congress.

Attend Day on the Hill.

Lead or promote an advocacy initiative approved by AAOMS or a state OMS society.

Deliver an OMSPAC contribution.

Meet with a member of Congress either in D.C. or locally.

Complete the Webinar "Engaging in State Government Affairs: A How-to Guide."

Sign up for Text Message updates.

Participate in at least two VoterVoice campaigns.

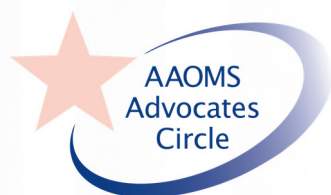
### Least time commitment

## AAOMS Advocates Circle

By completing all eight advocacy activities for the OMS Action Network in a calendar year, members earn special recognition and join a distinguished group of super advocates. The AAOMS Advocates Circle is an elite group within the OMS Action Network, recognizing oral and maxillofacial surgeons who demonstrate exceptional commitment to advocacy. This effort underscores the critical role OMSs play in shaping healthcare policy and advancing the specialty, amplifying the collective voice of the profession.

Members of the AAOMS Advocates Circle demonstrate the power of OMS advocacy in action.

Questions about your status? Contact the AAOMS Governmental Affairs Department at 800-822-6637 or [advocacy@aaoms.org](mailto:advocacy@aaoms.org).



## MyStory

Personal stories can inspire legislators to take action. AAOMS is seeking input from OMSs about their experiences with key association priorities. Share stories at [AAOMS.org/MyStory](https://AAOMS.org/MyStory) to help personalize these issues for lawmakers.



Learn more at  
[AAOMS.org/MyStory](https://AAOMS.org/MyStory)

## AAOMS Challenge Coin

Challenge coins are steeped in military tradition. The tokens possibly originated in ancient Rome, where soldiers were rewarded for valor with a bonus coin featuring the legion's mark. Instead of spending the coin, the soldiers often would keep it as a memento. In more recent times, commanders have presented challenge coins to recognize specific unit members' special achievements.

AAOMS designed its own Challenge Coin to recognize individuals who have made significant advocacy contributions on behalf of the Association. The distribution of these Challenge Coins will not only acknowledge these individuals for their extraordinary service but perhaps also provide an inspiration to others to promote the specialty through advocacy.

State society presidents, executive directors and lobbyists/government affairs staff may nominate a candidate for the AAOMS Challenge Coin by emailing [advocacy@aaoms.org](mailto:advocacy@aaoms.org).



Learn more at  
[AAOMS.org/Challenge](https://AAOMS.org/Challenge)



# AAOMS Day on the Hill

Day on the Hill is an annual event established to encourage OMSs to advocate for the specialty. Legislators are most receptive to the voices of their constituents, so it is important OMSs meet with their members of Congress and staff to share personal stories about the issues impacting the specialty, OMS practices and patients. AAOMS supplies talking points, issue briefs and tailored presentations to help participants prepare for meetings with members of Congress and their staff. This program is well suited for both those new to advocacy and experienced members familiar with sharing the specialty's message with legislators.



Learn more at  
[AAOMS.org/DayontheHill](https://AAOMS.org/DayontheHill)



## Sample Day on the Hill Agenda

### ***Tuesday***

4:30 to 5 p.m. Tips for Conducting a Congressional Visit (geared towards newcomers)

5:15 p.m. Cocktail Reception

6:30 to 8 p.m. Dinner & Keynote Speaker

### ***Wednesday***

7 to 8:30 a.m. Breakfast & Morning Program (includes discussion of legislative issues)

8:30 a.m. Congressional Meetings

11:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Optional Debriefing

5 p.m. or later Depart D.C. after completion of last visit

*Subject to adjustments*



# GET MORE INFORMATION

## Advocacy 101

Want to get involved but not sure where to start? This comprehensive web resource features information on all things advocacy! Watch one of our short videos or read one of our helpful handbooks. Remember – you are the specialty’s best advocate at all levels of government!



Watch helpful videos at  
[AAOMS.org/Advocacy101](https://AAOMS.org/Advocacy101)

## Earn CE

Learn essential information and training on state-level advocacy, which will enable members to engage effectively with state legislators and influence local policy.



Take “Engaging in State Government Affairs” at  
[AAOMS.org/CEonline](https://AAOMS.org/CEonline)



## Websites

*In alphabetic order*

### Federal news

- The Hill ([TheHill.com](https://TheHill.com))
- Politico ([Politico.com](https://Politico.com))
- Punchbowl News ([Punchbowl.news](https://Punchbowl.news))
- RollCall ([Rollcall.com](https://Rollcall.com))
- Washington Post ([WashingtonPost.com](https://WashingtonPost.com))
- Other local and national newspapers

### State news

- Governing ([Governing.com](https://Governing.com))
- National Conference of State Legislatures ([NCSL.org](https://NCSL.org))
- Stateline ([Stateline.org](https://Stateline.org))
- Other local and national newspapers

## Organizations

*In alphabetic order*

### Federal

- Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee ([DCCC.org](https://DCCC.org))
- Democratic National Committee ([Democrats.org](https://Democrats.org))
- Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee ([DSCC.org](https://DSCC.org))
- National Republican Congressional Committee ([NRCC.org](https://NRCC.org))
- National Republican Senatorial Committee ([NRSC.org](https://NRSC.org))
- Republican National Committee ([RNC.org](https://RNC.org))
- U.S. House of Representatives ([House.gov](https://House.gov))
- U.S. Senate ([Senate.gov](https://Senate.gov))

### State

- American Legislative Exchange Council ([ALEC.org](https://ALEC.org))
- The Council of State Governments ([CSG.org](https://CSG.org))
- National Association of Attorneys General ([NAAAG.org](https://NAAAG.org))
- National Conference of State Legislatures ([NCSL.org](https://NCSL.org))
- National Council of Insurance Legislators ([NCOIL.org](https://NCOIL.org))
- National Governors Association ([NGA.org](https://NGA.org))
- Individual state legislatures and political parties



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