

# AMA Physicians' Grassroots Webinar and Legislative Update

February 17, 2015





# AMA Physicians' Grassroots Webinar

# TOPICS

Five Keys for Being Heard (and AGREED With)

A large, dark blue downward-pointing arrow with a white outline, connecting the first topic to the second.

At Home Strategies

A large, dark blue downward-pointing arrow with a white outline, connecting the second topic to the third.

Your Checklist

# Who's Speaking?

## Stephanie Vance



- Former DC Staff Director for Rep. Blumenauer
- Former Lobbyist National Public Radio
- Author 5 books on Advocacy



# Your Role



**Education**



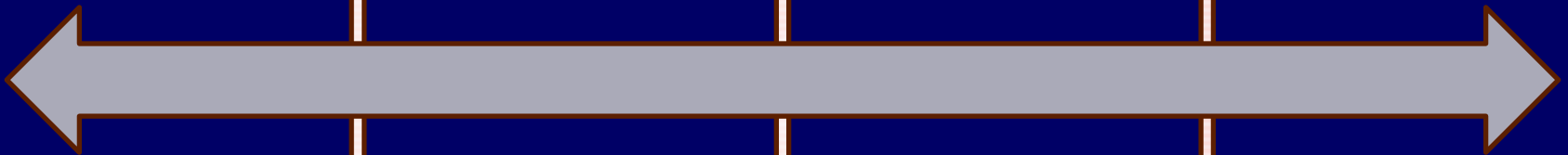
Public Relations



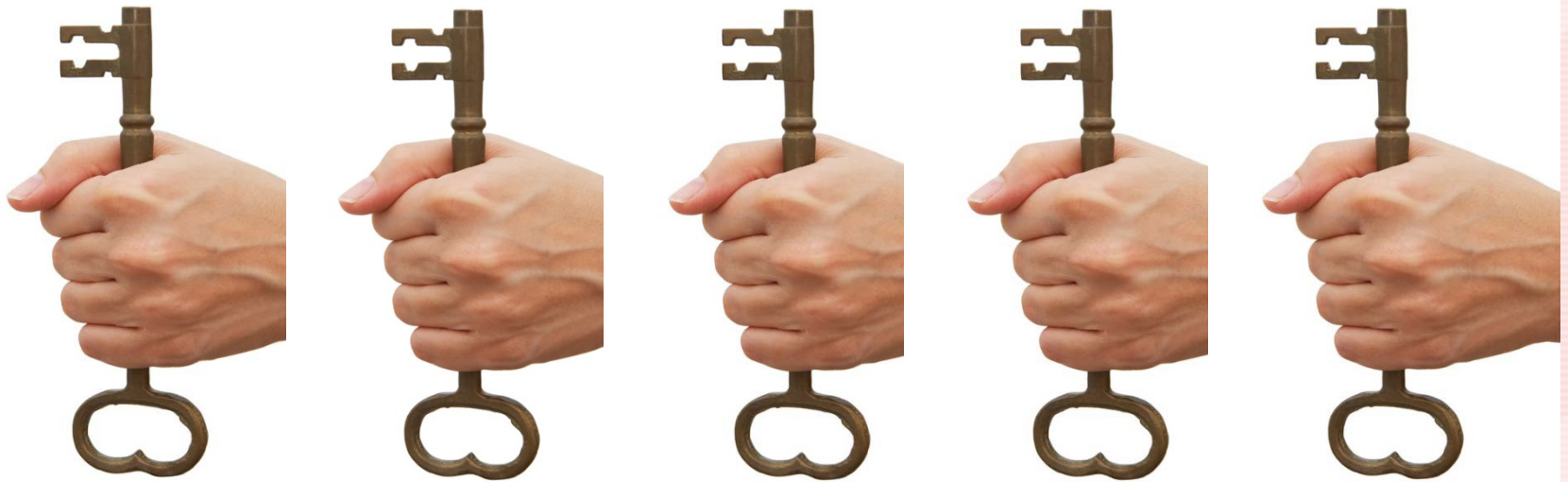
**Advocacy**



Lobbying



# FIVE KEYS TO BEING HEARD



# Number One: Look at the Larger Context

On the Agenda for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress

- Budget
- Sequestration
- Debt Ceiling
- Immigration
- Gun Control
- Climate Change
- Transportation  
Reauthorization
- Workforce Investment  
Act
- Election Reform
- Farm Bill
- Terrorism
- Tax Reform
- Unemployment
- Cyber-Security
- Renewable Energy
- Keystone

... and that's just the beginning

# Key Challenge

**Operating in a  
decision-making  
environment**



# Types of Policy Actions



The diagram consists of two large, dark blue arrows pointing towards each other, meeting at a central point. The left arrow points right and contains the word 'Intent'. The right arrow points left and contains the text 'Action or Inertia'. The background is a light pinkish-red with a faint, stylized American flag pattern of stars and stripes.

Intent

Action or  
Inertia

# Types of Policy Actions



Scope

Controversial  
or Easy

# Types of Policy Actions



Importance

Must do vs.  
May do

# Types of Policy Actions



Timeframe

Short vs.  
Long Term



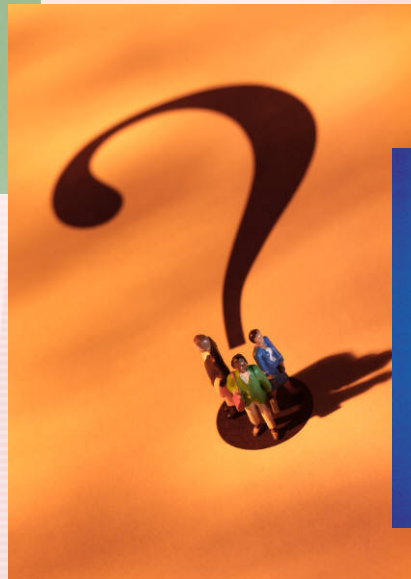
# The Larger Context: Messages That Resonate



# Number Two: Know What You Want

What's Your Ask?

- Relationship-building
- Policy-related



# Knowing What You Want Resource

www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/advocacy/grassroots-advocacy.page

AMA | Membership | JAMA Network | AMA Store

Sign In | Create an Account

AMA  
AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Search

House of Delegates Physicians Residents Medical Students Patients Media

Home Membership Resources Education Advocacy Publications News AMA Store About AMA

Advocacy » Grassroots Advocacy

A | A Text size Print Email

**Advocacy**

- Advocacy Topics
- Advocacy Update
- Events
- Federal Advocacy
- Grassroots Advocacy**
- Patients' Action Network
- Political Education
- Very Influential Physicians
- Political Action: AMPAC
- State Advocacy: ARC
- Health Policy

## Grassroots Advocacy

Last year, Congress came close to passing bipartisan legislation that would have permanently fixed the SGR crisis. In the end, they kicked the can down the road and passed another patch. While many members of Congress remain committed to finding a permanent solution to SGR, the reality is that time is running out for Congress to pass a permanent repeal before the patch expires on March 31, 2015.

That's why we need you to turn up the heat on your lawmakers to encourage them to continue working in a bipartisan manner and remind them that they have unfinished business on repealing the SGR formula and designing a new Medicare physician payment system.

[Send your members of Congress an urgent email](#) and call their district offices via the AMA's Physicians Grassroots Network hotline at (800) 833-6354.

Be sure to visit [FixMedicareNow.org](http://FixMedicareNow.org) for the latest information and resources on the AMA's efforts to engage physicians, patients and policymakers in the effort to repeal the flawed Medicare SGR formula and achieve reform that will transform Medicare into an effective, 21st century model of care.


SGR talking points

**Get Involved**

- Tell Congress to stop Medicare cuts
- Physicians Grassroots Network
- Very Influential Physicians
- Patients' Action Network
- AMPAC
- Political Education Programs

**Grassroots Advocacy Quick Links**

- AMA letter to House on SGR
- AMA letter to Senate on SGR





# Number Three: Know Who You're Talking To

**What gets them up in  
the morning**



**What keeps them up  
at night**





# Specific Questions to Answer About Legislators

- **Bottom Line:** What gets them up in the morning and keeps them up at night
- Their policy interests
- What kind of player are they?
- What type are they?
- Committee Situation
- Your Connections
- Re-election percentage
- Campaign finance situation

The collage consists of four screenshots of legislative websites:

- Top Left:** Texas House website showing the 83rd Legislature Regular Session. It includes a search bar for legislation by phrase or bill number, and a sidebar with links to various legislative resources like bills, statutes, and reports.
- Top Right:** United States Senate Democrats website. It features a news section with headlines such as "Reid Announces Updated Committee Assignments For 113th Congress" and "Hatch Announces Updated Committee Assignments For 113th Congress".
- Bottom Left:** OpenSecrets.org website. It displays a headline: "Millionaire Freshmen Make Congress Even Wealthier" with a sub-headline: "Jan 16 - 'Think the Congress that just ended was out of touch with America? The new one may be too better, judging by how much it works. Overall, members are even wealthier than in previous years, according to our analysis of their 2011 financial disclosure statements, and 207 of them - seven more than in 2010 - are millionaires'."
- Bottom Right:** Congress.gov website. It shows a search bar and a list of "Most Viewed Bills" including the "H.R. 1121 National Defense Authorization Act" and the "H.R. 1122 National Defense Authorization Act".

# Knowing Who You're Talking To Resources

**CONGRESS.GOV** United States Legislative Information

Home | Legislation | Congressional Record | Members | The Legislative Process | About | Help | Contact

**Search** All Sources Examples: H.R. 5658, "health care" GO Search Tips

**Most Viewed Bills**

- H.R. 602 (113th) Ending Federal Marijuana Prohibition Act of 2013
- S. 659 (113th) Safe Communities, Safe Schools Act of 2013
- H.R. 102 (113th) Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to repeal the twenty-second article

**Bills Searches and Lists**

- Introduced 113th Congress (2013-2014)
- Laws Enacted 113th Congress (2013-2014)
- Active Legislation (Senate.gov Finding Aid)
- Legislation for Fiscal Year 2015

Print | Subscribe | Share/Save | Give Feedback

**113th Congress (2013-2014)**

**Current Legislative Activities**

**House of Representatives**

- In Session Live Video
- House Calendar
- House Floor Activities
- Roll Call Votes
- Committee Hearings Video
- Committee Hearings Schedule

**Senate**

- In Session Live Video
- Senate Calendar of Business
- Executive Calendar (PDF, 357KB)
- On the Senate Floor
- Roll Call Votes
- Committee Hearings Schedule

**The Congressional Record**

- Congressional Record
- The official record of the proceedings and debates of the U.S. Congress.
- Go to the Congressional Record
- Get the app for iPhone or iPad

**The Legislative Process**

The official record of the proceedings and debates of the U.S. Congress.

**Current Members of Congress**

**House**

- Find a Representative
- Representatives A-Z

**Senate**

- Find a Senator
- Senators A-Z

**Find Your Representative**

Enter your zip code

**Legislative Activity**

Schedule | Floor Proceedings | Votes | Bills & Reports

Time (EST) Session

2:30 pm Field Hearing: Data Centers and the Cloud: Is the Government Optimizing New Information Technologies to Save Taxpayers Money?

4:00 pm Markup: H.R. 271, H.R. 1407, and H.R. 1919

**House Overview**

**Representatives**

Elected to a two-year term, each representative serves the people of a specific congressional district by introducing bills and serving on committees, among other duties.

**Leadership**

Visit Your Representative's Website

Representatives by last name

**Committees**

View Representatives by State

**Officers and Organizations**

Connecticut Delaware Maryland Massachusetts New Hampshire New Jersey New York North Carolina

**Public Disclosure**

**Financial Disclosure Reports**

Information about the source, fee, amount, or value of the incomes of representatives, officers, and candidates.

**Foreign Travel Reports**

Information about certain expenditures for all official foreign travel by representatives and staff.

**Gifts and Travel Filings**

Information about travel-related expenses incurred by representatives who are reimbursed by non-government sources.

**PROJECT VOTE SMART**

It's so good that even the Federal Government recommends it. — The New York Times

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Trending Search Terms

Alan Grayson • Bill Richardson • Barack Obama • Burnett • House Judiciary Cmte • Calandra • Croci • Downey • Dennis Heck • Independence USA

**Webchat: Lobbyists 2012: Out Of The Game Or Under The Radar?**

Mar 20 - This morning we chatted with a panel of experts on why the number of registered lobbyists has declined in recent years. Is it because there are really fewer lobbyists or are more just flying under the radar? The live chat is over, but you can still watch the replay and see what our panel had to say. Also, for more details on the issue, read our newly released report.

**Lobbyists 2012: Out of the Game or Under the Radar?**

Mar 20 - Spending on lobbying as well as the number of active lobbyists was down in 2012. But nearly half of lobbyists who were active in 2011 but reported no lobbying in 2012 continued to work for the same employers — suggesting that many have simply avoided the reporting limits while still contributing to lobbying efforts.

**Online Sales Tax Brings Powerful Interest Groups to the Hill**

Mar 18 - Who could be against something called the Marketplace Fairness Act? A few groups that spend a boatload in the 2012 elections.

**Live Web Chat March 20 -- Lobbyists 2012: Out of the game or under the radar?**

Mar 18 - Web chat Wednesday on new CRP report -- Lobbyists 2012: Out of the game or under the radar?

**Inside a Senate Investigation Watergate 40 Years Later**

Forty years ago this month, the Senate launched its best-known inquiry when chairman Sam Ervin of North Carolina unveiled to order the first public hearing of the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, commonly known as the Watergate Committee. Americans watched live televised broadcasts of the hearings as senators and staff questioned the president's closest advisors about the break-in and cover-up at the Watergate office complex and other "legal and improper campaign practices and financing" that occurred during the presidential campaign of 1972.

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**Public Disclosure**

**Financial Disclosure Reports**

Information about the source, fee, amount, or value of the incomes of representatives, officers, and candidates.

**Foreign Travel Reports**

Information about certain expenditures for all official foreign travel by representatives and staff.

**Gifts and Travel Filings**

Information about travel-related expenses incurred by representatives who are reimbursed by non-government sources.



# Who You're Talking To:

## Some Notes on Staff (and Why It's Often BETTER to Meet With Them!)



- Talk to the Right Person
- Remember, Your Issue Is One of Many
- Staff Contact Has Advantages Over Member Contact
- Institutional Memory in an Elected Official's Office Can Be Short
- Expect (and Appreciate) Youth

# Number Four: Know How to Talk to Them



Use the S.P.I.T. Technique  
Specific, Personal, Informative and Timely



# Know How to Talk to Them

## The Message Formula

- Hello, my name is [] and I'm from [] (establishes relevancy)
- I am here to talk to you about [key asks]
- Knowing of your interest in [info about your audience] I think you'll be interested as well
- This is important to the people I represent because [personal story]
- That's why I really hope you'll [ask]
- I'd like to follow-up by [follow-up ideas]
- Contact information?



# Number Five: Know How to Follow-Up

At Home:  
Use ALL Your  
Influence  
Strategies



# District In-Office Meetings

- Meeting with Legislator
- Meeting with DC Policy Staff (when available)
- Meeting with District Staff





# Townhalls

- What is a “townhall?”
- How do they take place?
  - In-person
  - Virtual
  - Telephone
- How do you do it?





# Do the Social Media Thing



#FixMedicareNow

Perhaps Most Important?  
Have Fun!



Fun Is Good  
*Dr. Seuss*

# Your Checklist

- ☐ What are you asking for?
- ☐ Why might your audience want that?
- ☐ What compelling story can you share?
- ☐ How can you best connect with staff?
- ☐ What can you do to follow-up?
  - ☐ Schedule a local meeting
  - ☐ Attend a townhall
  - ☐ Connect on social media





Go Forth and Advocate!



# Legislative Update: Medicare Physician Payment Reform

February 17, 2015



# SGR is the main grassroots subject for Spring

- Recurring topic, familiar to most
- 17<sup>th</sup> payment patch expires on April 1
  - Scheduled cuts about 20%
- Agreement on policy
  - Bill must be reintroduced in 114<sup>th</sup> Congress
- Budget offsets remain a challenge
  - Recent CBO score: \$174.5 billion
  - Freeze: \$137.4 billion



# “SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act”\*

## Policy

- Repeals SGR, promotes new models, eases P4P risk, provides needed flexibility and support
- Patches are fiscally irresponsible

## Process

- Cleared 3 committees in 2014
- Policy agreement from last year holds

## Politics

- Bipartisan, bicameral agreement
- 644 physician organizations on record in support
- Conservative voices weighing in

## Challenges

- Budget offsets
- Other stakeholders fear cuts, loss of annual legislative vehicle

\*H.R. 4015/ S. 2000 in 113<sup>th</sup> Congress

# Key provisions

## Addresses “regulatory tsunami”

- Consolidates and streamlines existing reporting and quality programs
- Merit-based Incentive Payment System provides greater flexibility

## Incentives APMs

- Additional payments and regulatory relief
- Provides technical support to small practices, rural areas
- Maintains viable fee-for-service option

## Provides stability

- Eliminates SGR formula
- Provides 5 years of positive updates

## Improves transparency

- Requires more timely feedback to physicians on performance
- Allows qualified entities to provide analysis and data for quality improvement
- Improves on-line patient resources





# Current Congressional environment

## House

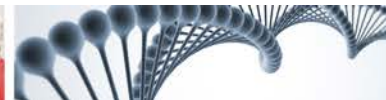
- 58 new Representatives
- 49% elected 2010 or later

## Senate

- 13 new Senators (7 former House members)
- 46% elected 2010 or later

## Partisanship

- Most elected in a highly partisan era
- No experience with big deals, compromise
- SGR legislation requires bipartisan support



# Key message points

## Time

- Current patch expires on April 1, 2015
- Another patch would be the 18<sup>th</sup> since 2003

## Fiscal responsibility

- More has been spent on temporary patches than it would cost to permanently repeal the SGR

## Reform

- Legislation drafted last year represents real Medicare reform
- Promotes new models expected to produce long-term savings

## Negotiate

- Policy agreement holds; remaining obstacle is agreement on a framework for budget offsets
- Leaders must be encouraged to do so before the deadline



# Use Social Media

- Show your support for SGR repeal on Twitter. Send a tweet using the hashtag #FixMedicareNow.
- Ask your Senators and your Representative to tweet from their official accounts:



“I support repeal of the SGR. Congress must act. #FixMedicareNow”.



# AMA resources



## **Tell your Senators and Representative: It is time to finish the job. Send Medicare physician payment reform to the President's desk.**

Few legislative days remain before the current Medicare physician payment patch expires on April 1, 2015. If Congress fails to pass comprehensive Medicare physician payment reform by this self-imposed deadline, we will be confronting an 18th payment patch.



## **Continuing to patch the SGR is fiscally irresponsible. Repeal is fiscally responsible.**

Since 2003, Congress has enacted 17 patches to stop Medicare physician payment cuts. The cumulative cost of these patches is \$169.5 billion, which exceeds the cost of simply repealing the SGR.



## **Frequently asked questions about repealing the SGR**





## AMA resources



[www.FixMedicareNow.org](http://www.FixMedicareNow.org)



Grassroots hotline: 1-800-833-6354



[www.ama-assn.org/go/grassroots](http://www.ama-assn.org/go/grassroots)



# Questions?

- Please type your questions for our presenters into the Chat box.

