



## Government Affairs Chairman Report



*Jeff Frankel, MD  
WSUS Government Affairs Chair*

The WSUS is actively involved in health care advocacy for you and your patients. Our mission is to enhance the delivery of urological care through education and advocacy. As Chair of Government Affairs I have the opportunity to work closely with the entire WSUS board and Executive Director on a wide array of issues that impact your practices.

There is no lack of health care legislation and regulations that impact us on a daily basis. Over the last year we have participated or created events that are germane to protecting your ability to practice high quality and efficient urological care.

We had our second annual legislative day on February 6<sup>th</sup> 2018. This involved approximately 20 members and residents as we travelled to Olympia and advocated on multiple issues such as balanced billing, step therapy, the opioid crisis and some potential wrongful death legislation. Much of our advocacy success lies in stopping legislation before it becomes law or even moves out of committees. This does not always get as much publicity, but is a crucial aspect of our advocacy. Through coalitions with likeminded organizations we are made aware of multiple issues and pool our voices. We have affiliations with the AACU state society network, the AUA, the WSPCaC and the WSMA. I am a member of the WSMA advocacy council, representing the WSUS, which meets 4 times a year. This involves multiple organizations and state agencies and reviews issues affecting health care in our state.

In March of 2017 we attended the joint advocacy conference and this March (2018) we were in DC for the urology summit. Multiple board members are active in health policy. Dr. Bensen is a member of the Medicare Carrier Advisory Committee and sits on the AUA Coding and Reimbursement Committee. I am the National Chair for UroPAC. The only federal PAC which represents urology through the sponsorship of the AACU. This year the WSUS opined on multiple issues including the merits of genetic testing for prostate cancer in both Oregon and Washington, as they debate coverage decisions regarding these tests. This year we will initiate sponsorship of the Zero prostate cancer run/walk which will take place on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>. Our annual meeting in June is full of health policy education with excellent local and national speakers and networking opportunities.

Our board is committed to representing all types of urological practices. We have a chair of men's and women's health and recently added pediatrics. It is important to remember that health

policy decisions impact us all regardless of whether one is employed, academic, independent, or in a large or small practice. We reach out to elected officials on behalf of you and your patients. We can help you establish a relationship with your representative which can be invaluable. The old adage “if you are not at the table, you are the menu” is critical to remember. We need to stay engaged at the policy level to protect our ability to practice, our skills, and do what is best for the patients.

Thank you for your membership in our state society.

Your board and executive directors work hard on your behalf and look forward to your enhanced engagement.

Please let us know about issues that concern you.