



THE LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES

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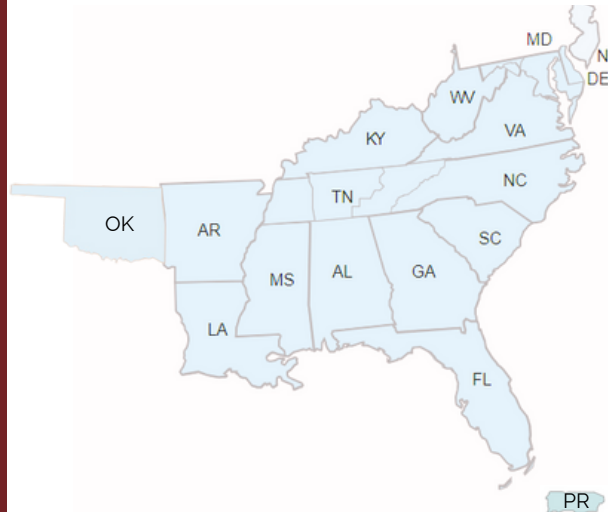
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TODD ASKEW
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT,
ADVOCACY, EXECUTIVE AND
BOARD OFFICES

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CLAY HAYS, MD,
CHAIR

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EXECUTIVE AND BOARD OFFICES



The new Trump administration has hit the ground running with an unprecedented number of executive actions that aim to remake large swaths of the federal government, health care included. The focus of these early actions has included diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, drug pricing, health care price transparency, gender affirming care, medical research, accreditation, and public health to name but a few. Large reductions in the federal workforce have touched almost every corner of the Department of Health and Human Services and proposals included in the recently proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026 reflect a major reorganization of that agency and an accompanying proposed reduction in spending of more than 25%. Many of these actions have been challenged in court and others will require Congressional action. Regardless of the ultimate outcome, it is not business as usual in Washington.

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POLITICAL UPDATE FROM THE AMA CONTINUED

One of the biggest challenges faced by the administration and the GOP-led Congress is the enactment of reconciliation legislation to put into place key portions of the administration's agenda, including extension of the 2017 tax cuts and accompanying reductions in federal spending. Under the reconciliation process, key committees are charged with developing legislation within their areas of jurisdiction to make changes to spending and revenues that meet targets set by the congressional budget resolution. One area that has garnered significant attention has been the requirement for the House Committee on Energy and Commerce to reduce spending by \$880 billion. By far, the largest program within the committee's jurisdiction, and therefore the likeliest for reductions, is the Medicaid program. Patient and provider groups across the country have expressed their opposition to Medicaid cuts, while proponents point to the significant growth of the program in recent years as unsustainable.

As has been communicated to the House of Delegates by AMA Board Chair Michael Suk, MD, JD, MPH, MBA, AMA policy is clear and longstanding. In a recent update, Dr. Suk wrote:

We believe that significant changes to Medicaid should occur in the context of comprehensive reforms that strengthen access to private, individually owned insurance. Reform should include increased Medicaid payment rates, reduced administrative burdens and innovations that improve care delivery and efficiency. Medicaid reform should streamline application and enrollment processes. Best practices such as continuous eligibility, auto-enrollment and retroactive coverage should be the standard, not the exception. And Medicaid should expand coverage for substance use disorders and twelve months of post-partum care.

On the other hand, AMA policy opposes federal funding caps, mandatory managed care enrollment, work requirements and lock-out provisions. Furthermore, AMA policy opposes payment cuts that threaten patient access to quality care. Absent private sector solutions expanded eligibility for Medicaid and CHIP remains essential.

Though legislation has not yet been introduced, it is through the lens of this House of Delegates policy that we will review any proposed changes.

While the effort to assemble reconciliation legislation has occupied much of Congress's attention over recent weeks, AMA has continued efforts to advance policies put forth by the House of Delegates. In the first quarter of the year alone, AMA Advocacy engaged policy makers on more than one hundred issues, including Medicare and Medicaid, workforce, student loans, maternal health, health IT, augmented intelligence, prior authorization, value-based payment, veteran's health, drug pricing, NIH grants, physician wellness, obesity, substance use disorder treatment and medical liability to name but a few.

And AMA, in partnership with a majority of state medical associations that are a part of the SE Delegation, has been no less engaged at the state capitols providing resources, review of legislation, testimony and strategy on prior authorization bills, scope of practice campaigns and physician wellness efforts. Together we have worked on medical liability, noncompetes clause, corporate practice of medicine, antitrust, genetic anti-discrimination, vaccines, Medicaid, and drug policy reforms among other topics. And several members of the delegation are beneficiaries of our well received Your Care is at Our Core campaign.

We truly appreciate your continued partnership on the most important issues facing physicians and patients and look forward facing the coming challenges together as we seek to promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health.

FROM THE CHAIR'S DESK

BY CLAY HAYS, MD



I Love Baseball...

There's something about baseball that brings out a sense of hope and excitement—and I can't help but notice how much it resembles our work with the American Medical Association House of Delegates.

Each season in baseball, teams refresh their rosters. New players are added, and veterans sharpen their skills. It's the same with the AMA. Each year, states send a mix of new and returning delegates and alternate delegates. These new "players" bring fresh perspectives and new ideas to an old but vital game. Some ideas work. Some don't. But every idea deserves to be heard, discussed, and debated. That's how we grow. So please, join me in welcoming our new players to the Southeastern Delegation.

Of course, the rules of the game stay mostly the same—just like the number of balls and strikes in baseball. But sometimes, the strike zone feels like it's shifted, and the bats seem different. In medicine, patient care remains our mission, but how we deliver it is evolving. We must embrace new tools like artificial intelligence while staying grounded in what matters most: compassionate, skilled physicians taking care of patients.

In baseball, coaches come and go—just like leadership changes in the AMA. We must support our candidates as they step into leadership roles and back them during their time at the helm. Their success is our success.

And then there's compensation. Major League players renegotiate every year. Sounds familiar? For us, it's Medicare. But unlike baseball, our salary cap seems to be shrinking! That's why we can't sit on the bench. We need bold ideas, innovative strategies, and yes—agents. That's where our PAC steps in, fighting for fair compensation and the resources we need to do our jobs.

Baseball is a long season, full of ups and downs—but when you win a championship, it's worth it. Our "preseason" is starting now, with resolution committee meetings, Zoom calls, and candidate interviews. I encourage each of you to step up to the plate.

Let's support our Southeastern Delegation. Let's bring our best to the House of Delegates in June in Chicago.

Let's play ball!

Clay

FAREWELL AND INSIGHTS:

A Q&A WITH DOCTOR STEPHEN ROCKOWER

The opinions expressed by Dr Rockower are his own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Southeast Delegation.

Tell us a little about yourself:

I graduated from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA, and went to Temple University for Medical School. I chose Temple over the other schools in Philadelphia, as the tuition was \$495, rather than \$10,000! I decided on Orthopaedics in my M1 year when my then girlfriend had an ACL rupture and had surgery in Philadelphia from a friend of the family and I watched. The Match sent me to George Washington in DC, and I stayed in the area. 3 kids, 3 houses and 4 dogs later, I'm still here. Some may know of my wife's death last year, and of my own illness. I became very aware and appreciative of the difficulties encountered by the disability community as I negotiated my own disability and recovery. As I move on to the next phase of my life, I am grateful for the friendships made at the AMA and in the SED.

When did you first become involved with the AMA and what piqued your desire to become a leader within the organization?

I became involved rather late in my career, as the tradition of Maryland was not to involve younger docs. When 2 slots opened, we had an election, and 3 of us ran. My platform was that the AMA was not the American Public Health Association, and we should be more concerned with the needs of physicians. My nature is to become involved in whatever I do, as I joined Reference Committees and eventually AMPAC.

Is there any one moment, resolution or accomplishment during your time with the AMA of which you are personally most proud?

I was proud to encourage our younger members from Maryland to become involved in the AMA and become Delegates. The average age of our Delegation has decreased by about 20 years during my tenure.

What are the things you will remember most fondly about your service to the AMA (Florida Delegation and SED)?

The camaraderie across the SE and the nation. We in Maryland are very insular, and it was enlightening to discuss and debate views from other regions and even across the SED.

What do you believe you will miss the most about being so involved?

The camaraderie.

Is there anything that you believe you will not miss?

The "high school" nature of our elections. The wordsmithing from the floor. The reluctance of so many physicians to donate to AMPAC.

Do you have any advice for a medical student, resident/fellow or YPS member who wants to take a more active role in the AMA? (Specifically something that might have helped you if you had known it or figured it out sooner during your years of service.)

Get involved early and volunteer to do stuff. Speak up.

Is there any one person, mentor or leader that stood out to you as exemplary and who influenced you tremendously during your tenure with the AMA?

I looked to John Poole as one of the best examples of service to medicine and to the AMA.

What hobbies or interests outside of medicine do you pursue?

Ooooh, don't get me started here! (grin) I have been a volunteer Docent at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History for 15 years. The Fossil Hall (sometimes inappropriately known as the Dinosaur Hall) re-opened in 2019 and then shut down during Covid. I developed a Zoom presentation of the hall that I gave to the AMA and many other groups over our time "inside".

CONTINUED FAREWELL FROM DOCTOR STEPHEN ROCKOWER

169th President, MedChi 2016-17
The Maryland State Medical
Society
Host, MedCast
Past President, Center For Healthy
Maryland HealthyMaryland.org
Chair, MMPAC medicalpac.org
Former Board Member, AMPAC
@AMPACOnline



Above: Dr. Rockower with a
Dimetrodon

Left: Dr. Rockower and his wife
Ann Sablosky





SED SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR AMA MEETING

FRIDAY, JUNE 06	SATURDAY, JUNE	SUNDAY, JUNE	MONDAY, JUNE	TUESDAY, JUNE
SED BOARD OF DIRECTORS RECEPTION-WEBER GRILL 8:00PM (AFTER CLOSE OF HOD) *BY INVITATION ONLY	SED CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS 8:00AM-12:00PM	NO FORMAL EVENTS	SED BREAKFAST 6:30AM	SED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 3:00PM (AT CLOSE OF HOD)
	SED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 5:00PM		SED ICE CREAM SOCIAL 9:00PM	

SED BREAKFAST MENU

THIS YEAR WE WILL FEATURE A CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST INCLUSIVE OF THE FOLLOWING:

COFFEE/JUICE
FRESH FRUIT
HARD BOILED EGGS
BAGELS WITH ASSORTED CREAM CHEESES
ASSORTED GREEK YOGURT
GRITS

DR BARNARD HAS GENEROUSLY OFFERED TO INCLUDE PLANT BASED SCRAMBLED EGGS AND PLANT BASED SAUSAGE



SNAPSHOTS FROM 2025 NAC



AMPAC UPDATE

My name is John Poole and I am here to ask for money..

If there ever was a time that the House of Medicine needed to be heard in Washington D.C.- now is that time. Healthcare, along with a myriad of other things, is going to be transformed. Physicians need to be driving that transformation, not reacting to the changes as changes are implemented.

AMPAC is the AMA's bipartisan political action committee. It is a vital part of the AMA's advocacy effort to lead the charge in Congress and the administration to create a sustainable healthcare system on behalf of our patients and our profession.

Why am I so invested in AMPAC? For me, political advocacy on behalf of our patients is good patient care. We took an oath to put our patients first and do no harm. Unless we advocate on their behalf, our patients will be harmed.

AMPAC's goal is to help elect and support physician-friendly candidates who will help us protect our patients and our profession. AMPAC is the oldest non-union PAC, started in 1961. Physicians can be proud that AMPAC helped institute several practices that are now standard operating procedures for effective advocacy. These include strategic spending on Federal candidates, independent expenditures and campaign schools to highlight a few.



There are presently 21 physicians in Congress- 4 in the Senate and 17 in the House. This is the highest number since 1820- the Missouri compromise. These physician champions form the core nucleus of our support to help us achieve our priorities including Medicare payment reform, protecting Medicaid access and research funding, preserving telehealth, reforming prior authorization as well as protecting our public health infrastructure.

There are currently 68 new Representatives in the House and 14 new Senators. Your investment in AMPAC helps the AMA advocacy team educate these new members on our priorities-whether through our lobbyists or physicians like you and me.

I have always been impressed by the leadership the Southeastern delegation to the AMA provides to our HOD by prioritizing physician practice sustainability through our resolutions and supporting like-minded colleagues who are willing to serve in AMA leadership.

Part of our leadership responsibility is for all of us to set an example and invest in AMPAC- hopefully at the Capital Club level. I get it that AMPAC supports candidates that you personally might never support- no matter what side of the aisle you are on. Believe me, at times, I feel the same way. But that is part of the process- how a bill becomes law- like we all learned in grade school. I write my AMPAC check for our patients and personally donate to candidates on my own behalf.

As you have heard me say many times, I would never ask you to do anything I am not willing to do. I am a proud Diamond Club member (\$5,000).

Join the fight for our patients and our profession. Let's show the HOD why we, the SED, are the leaders among leaders.

John W. Poole, M.D.

Chair, AMPAC Board of Directors

Immediate Past Chair Southeastern Delegation to the AMA

Invest in your profession here: [AMPAC](#)



**Southeastern Delegation Capitol
Club Diamond Members**

Oran Berkenstock: Tennessee
Joseph Costabile: New Jersey
Scott Ferguson: Arkansas
Sandra Fryhofer: Georgia
Clay Hays: Mississippi
Trey Lee: Tennessee
James Milam: Florida
Nancy Mueller: New Jersey
Michele Nedelka: Virginia
Jon Peebles: District of Columbia
John Poole: New Jersey
Kevin Reilly: Georgia
Theresa Rohr-Kirchgraber: Georgia
David Swee: New Jersey
Janice Tildon-Burton: Delaware

HONORING OUR HEROES: FOLLOWING THE 101ST AIRBORNE ACROSS EUROPE

SHAWN C. JONES, MD, FACS

Celebrating Our Veterans This D-Day Anniversary

Evelyn and I promised our children a European trip when they finished college. Shawn Jr. loved the HBO series based on the Stephen Ambrose best seller, "Band of Brothers". The book and the series chronicles the experiences of Easy Company, 2nd Battalion of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, following them throughout WWII. The company was referred to as "Easy" after the radio call for "E" in the phonetic alphabet used during World War II. Just as an aside, today they would be called Echo Company as the phonetic alphabet has changed.

I located "Band of Brothers Tour Company" that sold several tour options and all of them followed some portion of the 101st "steps" through Europe. Shawn Jr and I chose the 12 day all-inclusive tour that started in Normandy on Omaha Beach and ended at Hitler's Eagles Nest in Bavaria. Though neither my father or I served in the 101st, the 101st Airborne Division which is now an Air Assault Division is headquartered just an hour or so down the road from Paducah in Fort Campbell, Kentucky. That post is where our family met Colonel Wally Montgomery MD, my father-in-law, when he flew home from Saudi Arabia following Desert Shield and Storm. I was on active duty at Fort Knox at the time.

As we approach the anniversary of D-Day this June 6th, we pause to honor the courage and sacrifice of those who changed the course of history. They are often referred to as 'The Greatest Generation'. The 101st Airborne Division—the legendary "Screaming Eagles"—played a critical role in the liberation of Europe. Our journey gave us just a glimpse into the bravery of these soldiers.



Omaha Beach and the Normandy Invasion

Though the 101st Airborne dropped inland, away from Omaha Beach itself, their mission was essential to the success of the seaborne assault. In the predawn hours of June 6, 1944, paratroopers descended into the darkened fields of Normandy, often far from their intended drop zones. Their scattered, chaotic landings created confusion among German defenders—vital disarray that helped secure Omaha, Utah, and the other beaches. Dick Winters and elements of the 101st took out German artillery targeting Utah Beach.

Meanwhile, intense fighting on Omaha Beach cost over 2,000 American lives in a single day, a staggering price for the establishment of the Western Front. It was impossible to stand on that beach at Colleville-sur-Mer codenamed Omaha and look up at the bluff facing you and imagine what it would have been like. To run across the beach with obstacles and mines, slowed with a pack and equipment while being shot at by enfiladed machine gun fire and pre-sited artillery barrages is just simply unthinkable.



The Richard Winters Monument outside Brecourt Manor

HONORING OUR HEROES: FOLLOWING THE 101ST AIRBORNE ACROSS EUROPE-CONT.

Dead Man's Corner

Near Carentan, Dead Man's Corner became infamous after a German tank commander was killed in his armored vehicle, his lifeless body visible for days, slumped over the hatch. The intersection was critical to linking the beachheads and became the site of intense combat for the 101st. Today, the Dead Man's Corner Museum preserves the legacy of those first harrowing days, filled with artifacts and firsthand accounts of the paratroopers' grueling fight to secure Normandy's crucial crossroads. There is an opportunity to take a simulated flight over the English channel in a C-47 at the D-Day Experience. Approximately 1,087 C-47s transported roughly 13,000 American paratroopers from the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions over Normandy shortly after midnight on June 6, 1944.

Sainte-Mère-Église and the Man on the Steeple

One of the most iconic images of D-Day is the American paratrooper caught on the church steeple at Sainte-Mère-Église. Private John Steele of the 82nd Airborne, hailing from Metropolis, Illinois, was hit by flak during his drop and became entangled on the church spire. Dangling helplessly for hours while the battle for the town raged below, Steele pretended to be dead before eventually being captured and then escaping. His story became emblematic of the bravery and perseverance of the airborne forces and is immortalized today by a mannequin hanging from the same church tower.

A little secret: Steele actually was on the other side of the church but the mannequin would not then be as easily visualized from the square. So it was placed on the incorrect side for photo ops. Private Steele's part was played by Red Buttons in the movie, "The Longest Day". There is an excellent airborne museum at Sainte-Mère-Église. There are also lesser known places and impactful stories at Sainte-Marie-du-Mont, Angoville au Plain etc.



Sainte-Mère-Église

Bayeux and the Preservation of History



The church at Sainte-Marie-du-Mont

Unlike many towns in the invasion zone, Bayeux was miraculously spared from heavy bombing, in part due to a professional cyclist who secretly worked for the resistance. He messaged that there were no troops in Bayeux so it was not bombed. British forces, recognizing the city's historical and cultural significance, deliberately avoided destroying it during their advance. This fortunate circumstance also preserved the priceless Bayeux Tapestry, an 11th-century embroidered chronicle of William the Conqueror's invasion of England. Today, the tapestry remains a symbol of resilience and a poignant reminder of the cost and continuity of warfare across the centuries.

HONORING OUR HEROES: FOLLOWING THE 101ST AIRBORNE ACROSS EUROPE-CONT.

Pegasus Bridge and British Valor

The daring assault on Pegasus Bridge by British paratroopers of the 6th Airborne Division was one of the first engagements of D-Day. Under the command of Major John Howard, the men landed in gliders within yards of their objective and swiftly captured the bridge, preventing German reinforcements from reaching the beaches. Lieutenant Den Brotheridge, leading the first charge across the bridge, was fatally wounded, becoming the first Allied soldier to die on D-Day. His daughter, Margaret, born after his death, has faithfully attended many D-Day commemorations in honor of the father she never met but whose legacy shaped her life. The indentation from the blast of the grenade which took his life is still visible on the bridge.

Operation Market Garden

Market Garden was an Allied military operation during the Second World War fought in the German-occupied Netherlands from 17 to 25 September 1944. Its objective was to create a salient into German territory with a bridgehead over the Lower Rhine River at Arnhem. This would provide an Allied invasion route into northern Germany. The British headquarters near Arnhem was in the Hartenstein Hotel in Oosterbeek. It now is an excellent history museum. The action there was the subject of the 1977 movie "A Bridge Too Far". Both films, The Longest Day and a Bridge Too Far were based on books by Cornelius Ryan.



Pegasus Bridge



The Bridge "Too Far" at Arnhem

Bastogne and the Battle of the Bulge

The last albeit desperate German offensive in World War II, fought from December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945, in the Ardennes region of Belgium and Luxembourg is commonly known as the Battle of the Bulge. It began as a total surprise attack. By December 1944, the 101st found itself surrounded in Bastogne during the brutal Battle of the Bulge. Bastogne was strategically important in the German offensive as it was where multiple roads which could carry German armor converged. General Maxwell Taylor, the division's commander, was in the United States for meetings and missed the initial siege, leaving Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe in temporary command. McAuliffe famously responded "Nuts!" to a German surrender demand, capturing the division's defiant spirit. In nearby Foy, the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment faced savage combat to recapture the town from entrenched German forces, enduring freezing conditions and heavy casualties. Their sacrifices helped break the German offensive and hastened the collapse of Nazi Germany. Though relatively shallow, the foxholes in the woods overlooking Foy are still visible.

Dachau and Confronting Horror

As the Allies pressed into Germany, elements of the 101st Airborne approached Dachau, one of the Nazis' earliest and most notorious concentration camps. Although primarily liberated by the 45th Infantry Division, members of the 101st helped secure the area and bear witness to the atrocities within. Dachau was not only a prison—it served as a training ground where SS engineers perfected the use of gas chambers for mass murder, a dark technological evil that would later be deployed at extermination camps like Auschwitz. The liberation of Dachau revealed the full extent of Nazi brutality and deepened the moral resolve of the Allied effort.



To honor the dead, to remind the living.
(Dachau)

HONORING OUR HEROES: FOLLOWING THE 101ST AIRBORNE ACROSS EUROPE-CONT.

The Eagle's Nest: Victory in the Bavarian Alps

High in the German Alps at Berchtesgaden sat Hitler's "Eagle's Nest," a lavish retreat built as a gift for his 50th birthday. The 101st Airborne was among the first to arrive after German surrender, finding the opulent stronghold abandoned. Standing on the balcony overlooking the Alps, the soldiers symbolically claimed victory over a regime that had plunged the world into unprecedented horror.



A Grateful Tribute

As physicians and citizens, we owe an immeasurable debt to the men of the 101st Airborne and their fellow liberators. They preserved not only our physical freedoms but the very ideals that allow healing, hope, and humanity to flourish. This D-Day anniversary, let us remember their sacrifice—and strive to honor it in how we live and serve each day.

Traveling the Trail of the Screaming Eagles

Practical Travel Tips for Walking the Path of Heroes

For those who might want to honor the 101st Airborne's legacy by seeing these historic sites firsthand, a thoughtfully guided tour can bring history vividly to life. I highly recommend Beaches of Normandy Tours (www.beachesofnormandy.com), the successor to the renowned Band of Brothers Tours. Their expert historians and carefully crafted itineraries offer a deeply meaningful experience. (I have no financial interest or agreement with the company)

Pro Tip:

Book early, especially around D-Day anniversaries, as tours fill quickly. My son and I were at Omaha Beach for Memorial Day. It is not quite as crowded as D-Day but also will have ceremonies and re-enactors present in full military regalia.

Prepare for emotional impact—many travelers describe these journeys as profoundly moving and life-changing.

Bring sturdy shoes, a sense of reverence, and an open heart.

Following the trail of the 101st across Europe isn't just a trip; it's a pilgrimage in honor of the men who preserved liberty for generations to come.

My father was so moved by the stories my son and I told upon our return that he subsequently took my sister, her children and my family all back for a 6 day tour of the beaches. Shawn Jr was in clinical rotations in medical school and was not able to go with us.



Left to right: Jackson, Rebecca, My father, William Jones (center). Addie and Caleb on a D-Day assault beach