American College of Physicians Services | Texas Chapter

ADVOCACY ALERT

Issue 2 | 2026 Edition

LOBBYIST REPORT

TXACPS Legislative Update | Quarter Two

The interim season is in full swing, and the TxACPS is in the thick of it. After 15 sessions wearing shoe leather out walking these hallways, I can tell you this interim feels different. It feels like the legislature is preparing for a "healthcare session". There's a genuine appetite to understand healthcare funding, cost-drivers, delivery models, economics, and what the data reflects before anyone reaches for solutions. That's rarer than you might think, and it's an opportunity and teaching moment we intend to use.

The Lay of the Land: Interim Charges Are Set

When the Lt. Governor and Speaker released their interim study charges in late March, the roadmap for the path to the 90th Legislature came into focus. Between now and November, four key committees will be gathering testimony to influence the committee's recommendations shaping the bills filed when lawmakers return in January 2027. For TxACPS, the most consequential venue is the House Select Committee on Health Care Costs but make no mistake — the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and the House Insurance and Public Health Committees all have charges that touch our members directly.

We Are Hearing at the Capitol

Chairman James Frank opened the Select Committee's work with a two-day hearing that I found genuinely refreshing. The chair invited economists, actuaries, and policy researchers — and explicitly told everyone in the room he wasn't looking for solutions yet. He wanted facts. In thirty years, I'm not sure I've heard a chairman say that out loud. The data presented was sobering: a Texas family of four is now spending nearly $27,000 annually on employer-sponsored premiums — roughly the price of a new car, every single year. Yale economist Dr. Zack Cooper made clear that hospital price growth — outpacing every other sector of the economy — is a primary culprit. Expect hospital consolidation and pricing power to remain central themes as this committee develops its recommendations.

Over in the Senate, Chair Lois Kolkhorst called the Health and Human Services Committee together for a hearing lasting 9 hours (with a similar philosophy — invited witnesses, no public testimony, and a hard focus on cost drivers: PBMs, facility fees, health plan practices, and the broader economics of the system. Organized medicine was not on those panels, but we were in the room, taking notes, and we will be on a panel when prepared when next hearing is called.

The House Public Health and House Insurance Committees held dueling hearings the following week, conveniently across the hallway from one another. Public Health focused on rural health, telehealth, and workforce. House Insurance Chairman Jay Dean is already telegraphing he intends to refile legislation allowing health plans to sell cheaper policies to employers by rolling back network adequacy standards, prior authorization protections, and other reforms we've fought hard to put into statute. We will be working that committee aggressively.

TXACP In Action

While Austin has been busy, so have we. In Corpus Christi, TxACPS leaders met over an early Saturday breakfast with Representative Denise Villalobos (R-Corpus Christi)...

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ACP Advocates for Internal Medicine Network

...a newly appointed member of the Select Committee. She's an engineer by profession, in full listening mode, and she asked us to keep coming back. That kind of direct, district-level access is exactly how long-term relationships — and legislative wins — are built. Expect more of these district meetings in the months ahead, and I'll be calling on local leaders to join me.

In Mid-May we went to Washington, 22 TxACPS physicians, residents, and students participated in ACP's Leadership Day, visiting 26 congressional offices to advance priorities on vaccine access, workforce development, and Medicare payment rates. It was a strong showing, and the kind of consistent federal presence that complements our state work.

Looking Ahead
Between now and November, every committee will be refining its interim report — the document that becomes the legislative blueprint for 2027. The window to shape those recommendations is open right now, and it will not stay open forever. We are engaging every committee with testimony, data, and the physician perspective that too often goes unheard when plans, PBMs, and hospital systems dominate the microphone.

Stay engaged. The work being done this Summer and Fall will define our success next session.

2026 LEADERSHIP DAY

May 12th - 13th
Texas ACP sent a delegation to ACP Leadership Day in DC this spring, alongside delegations from almost every chapter in the country. The delegations spent the first day in educational and training sessions. The next day was spent at the Capitol, actively engaging with our legislators and advocating for our positions. Thanks for representing our #IMProud Texans!

We hope you will join us next year-- mark your calendar.

Save the Date!

2027 Leadership Day
May 11th - 12th, 2027

HPPC REPORT

Same Issues, New Cycle - And the Work Ahead

Over the many years I've been involved in the politics and policy of medicine, I've noticed something consistent: the priority issues don't change, but the players, the focus, and the prioritization do. That pattern holds again this cycle — and understanding it is the first step toward being effective in Austin.

What Your Committee Has Identified

Earlier this year, the Health and Public Policy Committee met and asked each member a simple question: what is your top legislative priority for this interim? Understanding that each of us holds any number of issues close, it is vital that we narrow our focus — so we can direct our efforts, measure our progress, and evaluate success.

After discussion and surveys, your committee identified six areas deserving particular attention as we head toward Session:

- Prior authorizations and payment denials
- Affordable care and access to care
- Disinformation and misinformation in public health and vaccines
- Scope of practice, graduate medical education, and workforce
- Market efficiency, price transparency, and PBM regulation — with a clear eye toward what is actually achievable in the upcoming legislature
- Vaccine reimbursements, formularies, and the impact of new federal legislation

The Road to Session

Over the next six months, the House and Senate will hold a series of committee hearings on the interim charges assigned to their respective committees. TxACPS will use every one of those opportunities to educate, highlight our priorities where they fit the discussions, and advance our agenda for the 90th Session. Our lobbyist is engaged, relationships are being built in districts across the state, and organized medicine has a place at the table. After all, if you are not at the table you will probably be on the menu!

ACP Advocates for Internal Medicine Network

ACP ADVOCATES FOR INTERNAL MEDICINE NETWORK

Join AIMN Today!

Please join ACP Advocates in Internal Medicine to join more than 15,000 colleagues in the Advocates for Internal Medicine Network (AIMn) in advocating for the interests of internal medicine in Washington, D.C.

The AIMn program is for ACP members interested in participating in federal advocacy. It is designed to help members engage with their federal lawmakers on policy issues important to ACP and internal medicine. It's free and painless to sign up!

ACP Legislative Action Center

Follow @AdvocatesIM

In December, TxACPS will conduct its biannual member-wide survey. We need your insight and feedback on your priorities, your issues, and your level of support for the issues for the upcoming session. This survey directly shapes our legislative strategy. When it arrives in your inbox, please take it seriously — it is one of the most meaningful ways your voice enters the process. Also, if you do not receive please check you SPAM filter and reach out to us if it did not arrive at all!

I am honored to Chair the TxACPS Health and Public Policy Committee as we build momentum toward the 90th Texas Legislature! The interim is when the real work happens. I am grateful to serve alongside this committee, and I look forward to reporting our progress as we build toward January.

Robert Jackson, MD MACP
Health & Public Policy Committee Chair, TXACPS