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AVAHO Advocacy Newsletter

Welcome to the inaugural AVAHO Advocacy Newsletter! AVAHO has spent this past year occupied in activities solidifying the Association's message and presenting our leaders as trusted resources on important healthcare issues.

As the Advocacy Committee looks towards 2025, and beyond, its charge is to energize and engage our membership with advocacy efforts. With monthly meetings, virtual government affairs seminars, and an annual Washington, DC, Capitol Hill experience, AVAHO is eager to expand the Association's reach with decision-makers. If this is of interest, reach out to the Advocacy Committee by completing this [form](#)!



01/03

Capitol Hill Day 2024



Capitol Hill Day

Seizing the moment in a whirlwind, on May 23, 2024, AVAHO initiated its first Washington DC Capitol Hill Day! Armed with folders on the Association's mission, the AVAHO legislative policy agenda, and key talking points, 10 Advocacy Committee leaders, along with Executive Director Julie Lawson and Health Policy Advisor Alec Stone led multiple meetings with US Senate and House congressional staff, and in some instances elected officials.

The CAREERS Act (S. 10), the PACT Act, and FY23 VA appropriations topped the discussions. Staffers and legislators learned about the expertise of AVAHO's 1300 members across in various health care professions and their roles in the VA. In many cases it was obvious congressional staff were unaware of the impact the Association's members have within the VA. This introductory conversation allowed AVAHO to talk directly with those who have legislative authority over the VA about cancer care VA and how to support our support the veteran-centered healthcare providers at the VA. Plans are already being solidified for the Capitol Hill Day 2025. Email us at advocacy@avaho.org to get involved!

About the AVAHO Advocacy Committee

- As an organization dedicated to helping veteran-centered healthcare professionals provide the best possible cancer care, AVAHO is proud to advocate on local, state, and federal legislative efforts, as well as collaborate with other organizations to improve cancer care delivery to our nation's veterans, and to support the veteran-centered healthcare providers who are delivering that care.
- Due to our diverse and multi-disciplinary membership, AVAHO is uniquely positioned to advocate on a variety of issues facing our healthcare professionals and veterans. Primary areas of focus include: improving veteran access to quality cancer care, Support veteran-centered cancer care professionals and increasing cancer research and clinical trials within the VA and DoD networks

Committee Members

David Eplin PharmD, Chair, VISN 10 CRH
Elizabeth Hansen PharmD, Chair-Elect, VISN 12 PBM
Emily Fasciana RD, Wilkes-Barre VAMC
Shruti Trehan MD, Medical Oncology, Miami VAMC
Michael Chang MD, Radiation Oncology, Richmond VAMC
Cindy Bowman RN, Bay Pines VAHCS

Tony Quang MD, Radiation Oncology, Long Beach VAMC
Abigail McEnroe RN, Roseburg HCS
Mariam Chapman, Veteran
Janice Schwartz AVAHO Education Director
Julie Lawson AVAHO Executive Director
Alec Stone AVAHO Advocacy Consultant

Legislation of Interest

Presidential Election 2024 and the 119th US Congress

No matter a person's political ideology, this year's presidential election is unique in many ways. Of particular importance to AVAHO is that both major party's Vice-Presidential nominees have served in active military duty and have a unique understanding of service and Veteran Affairs. Both Governor Tim Walz (D-WI) and Senator JD Vance (R-OH) proudly proclaim their support for the armed forces and equally important, both party platforms indicate dedicated points to healthcare and Veterans Affairs. Regardless of the election's outcome in November, AVAHO will educate and advocate for continued support for the VA and for hematology and oncology issues.

Republican Party Platform

Support Active and Healthy Living Republicans will support increased focus on Chronic Disease prevention and management, Long-Term Care, and Benefit flexibility. We will expand access to Primary Care and support Policies that help Seniors remain in their homes and maintain Financial Security. Take Care of Our Veterans Republicans will end luxury housing and Taxpayer benefits for Illegal Immigrants and use those savings to shelter and treat homeless Veterans. We will restore Trump Administration reforms to expand Veterans' Healthcare Choices, protect Whistleblowers, and hold accountable poorly performing employees not giving our Veterans the care they deserve.

Democratic Party Platform

We will support increased and sustainable funding for health and medical research and federal grants across agencies, including at the NCI and other components of the NIH, the CDC, and the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality. We will increase the federal investment in research and development for new medications through the NIH, and make sure that there is a return on that investment for taxpayers. We will also build on the foundation of the Obama-Biden Administration's Cancer Moonshot to break down silos and accelerate research into cancer and cancer treatments by creating an agency with the sole mission of finding new cures and treatments for cancer and other diseases.

Articles of Interest

[House Passes First FY25 Bill, Fully Funding VA Health Care and Bolstering National Security](#)

[Cancer Moonshot and the VA](#)

[Bipartisan lawmakers press Biden administration on MDMA treatment for PTSD](#)

[Advancing Cancer Treatment Access with 22 New 'Close to Me' Sites](#)

[Bolstering Care for Veterans Aim of Bipartisan Tester, Boozman Bill](#)

03/03

Upcoming Events: Post Election
Webinar and Capitol Hill Day
2025!