



Welcome to this month's edition of the AMA's Very Influential Physician (VIP) Insider. Read on for details about these topics:

- Top issues in health care to watch for in 2018
- Tax Cuts and Jobs Act enacted; repeals the ACA individual mandate
- When it comes to advocacy - how many personalized emails are needed to make a difference?
- AMPAC to host webinar on Strategic PAC Fundraising on January 18
- Still time to register for the 2018 AMPAC Candidate Workshop

Top issues in health care to watch for in 2018

Earlier this week the AMA has outlined its legislative and regulatory priorities for 2018, which are grounded by its mission, policies, and long-standing goal of influencing a legal and regulatory environment that supports a healthier nation.

These issues include:

- Protecting access to coverage
- Medicare physician payment reform
- Telemedicine
- Drug pricing transparency
- Insurer issues
- Ending the opioid epidemic
- Prior authorization
- Regulatory relief
- Scope of practice

The AMA remains committed to advancing these and other issues important to the delivery of health care in this country. [Learn more about these hot button issues.](#)

Tax Cuts and Jobs Act enacted; repeals the ACA individual mandate

Late last year after much uncertainty both the House and Senate passed H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The bill passed on partisan votes of 51-48 in the Senate and 224-201 in the House. President Donald Trump signed the bill into law on Dec. 22. The bill overhauls the individual, corporate and international components of the existing federal tax code. It includes recommendations highlighted in an [AMA letter](#) sent to the conferees.

Specifically, the final bill included language that would maintain the tax deductibility of high medical expenses, and also lower the percentage of a person's adjusted gross income that qualified medical expenses must exceed—from 10 percent to 7.5 percent for 2017 and 2018—in order to claim the deduction. In addition, the final bill adopted the AMA's recommendation to maintain the deduction for student-loan interest and the exemption from taxation for qualified tuition reductions. Despite the urging of the AMA and many other health care stakeholders, the final bill included language that effectively repeals the individual responsibility provisions of the Affordable Care Act by zeroing out the tax penalty for individuals who fail to maintain health care insurance coverage.

How many personalized emails are needed to make a difference?

Turns out not as many as you think. Our partners at the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) recently

polled House Legislative Correspondents (they handle the constituent mail). The question was asked "If your Member has not arrived at a firm decision on an issue, approximately how many personalized email messages from constituents does it take for your office to consider taking the action requested?"

The response? A resounding 90% of respondents agreed that fewer than 100 personalized emails on a given issue is enough to get their office to consider taking the requested action, with 70% saying that it takes fewer than 50 such emails. Compare that to a similar question CMF asked about FORM emails, which found that advocacy organizations need to generate between 50-200 form emails to have influence.

Organizations that mobilize advocacy campaigns often dream about how their successful campaign could crash Capitol Hills' email server. This research shows that its quality, not quantity that matters more! Food for thought when you start organizing your next advocacy campaign.

Join us for an upcoming webinar on Strategic PAC Fundraising

[Register today!](#)

Smart medical treatment requires a plan, why shouldn't your fundraising efforts? Join us for a 90-minute webinar at 6 p.m. Eastern on January 18 that will help you develop a more strategic approach to your PAC fundraising.

Moderated by Amie Adams, a leading PAC expert, and AMPAC Board Members Vidya Kora, MD and Lyle Thorstenson, MD we will discuss best practices and provide real-life examples for hosting successful PAC events, how to be effective when engaging in peer-to-peer solicitation, and the best methods and tools for electronic fundraising. Participants will be able to ask questions, share their experiences, and engage with the panel of experts - you won't want to miss this!

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

[Mark your calendars and register today.](#)

Registration is now open for the 2018 AMPAC Candidate Workshop

Ever wonder how doctors get elected to Congress or your state legislature? Considering a run for office yourself? Then the Candidate Workshop is for you! This one and a half day workshop will provide you with the skills and strategic approach you will need to make a run for public office.

Registration is now open - join us March 2-4 for the AMPAC Candidate Workshop in Washington, DC, and we'll teach you how to run a winning political campaign, just like we taught many of your AMA colleagues over the years!

The deadline to register is February 2. The program fills up fast so if you're interested - don't delay! For more information visit us at [AMPAC online](#). To apply, simply fill out the [online registration form](#) or email us your questions at: politicaleducation@ama-assn.org.

Your run for office starts today!

For more information, please visit:



[AMA Physicians' Grassroots Network](#)



[AMPAC](#)