

Summer Provides Opportunities to Connect with Your State Legislators

Grassroots Advocacy Key for Preserving, Advancing Family Medicine

As the Michigan Legislature remains on its summer schedule, with limited session days and legislators working mainly in their districts, no actions were taken in the House or Senate this week. Legislators and their staff continue to focus on priority issues in preparation for returning to the full fall schedule. Addressing lead poisoning is expected to be a top issue that will see the introduction of additional bills aimed at reducing exposure risks and ensuring timely treatment for those affected. Your MAFP advocacy team continues to meet with legislative staff and stakeholders throughout the summer recess to ensure legislation is the least onerous on family physicians as possible.

Meanwhile, summer offers the perfect opportunity for MAFP members to build and nurture relationships with elected officials while they are in their home districts. Having a strong relationship with your senator and representative raises your visibility as a sought-after expert when it comes to the impact a bill could have on the practice of family medicine and patients in Michigan. It also amplifies the voice of Michigan Academy of Family Physicians in its work of increasing access to care, protecting physician-led team-based care, and advocating for investments in primary care and the primary care workforce.

Most legislators host in-district coffee hours and fundraisers throughout the year, but especially in the summer. Between now and September, you may even find your legislator at your community's local fair. Summer is also an ideal time to invite legislators to your office, clinic, or residency program. Touring a new clinic is just one example of the type of event that legislators frequently attend while they are working in their home district.

If you would like to connect with your elected officials but are not sure the best way to go about doing so, reach out to MAFP's director of government relations, Matt Black—he is happy to help you schedule and plan an event, find the date/location of legislative events in your community, or even attend an event with you. He can be reached at mblack@mafp.com.