

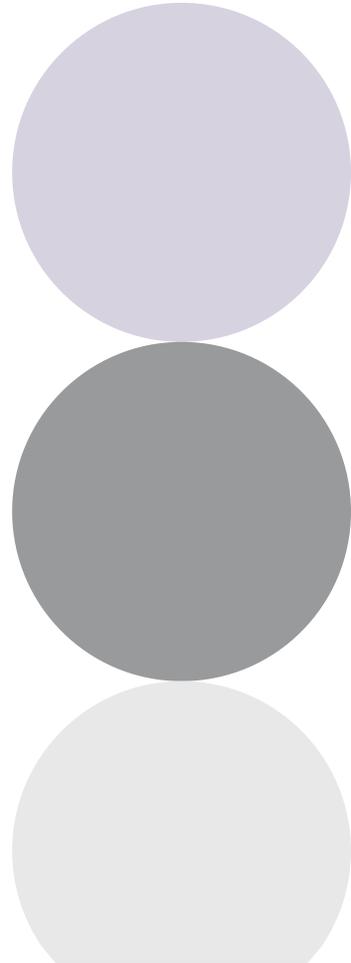


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# State Affairs Update

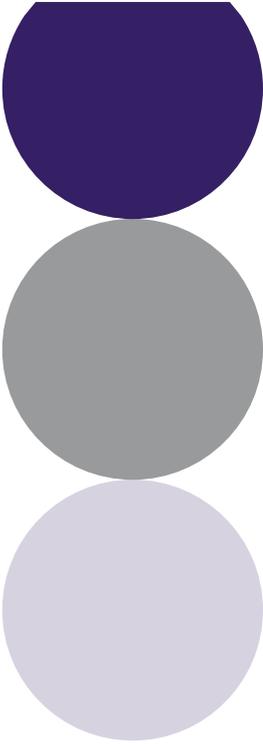
Jennifer Larson, MD  
Regional Rep., Secretariat for State  
Affairs  
(Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin)



# Financial Disclosures

- NONE

# State Governmental Affairs



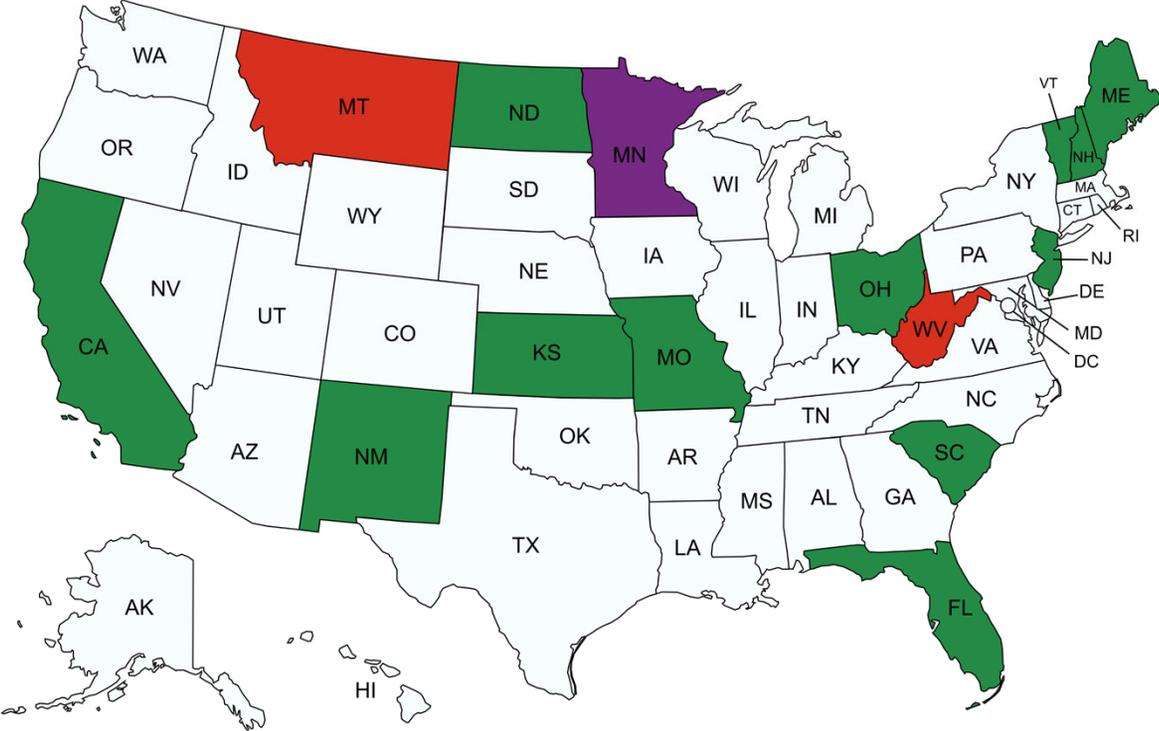
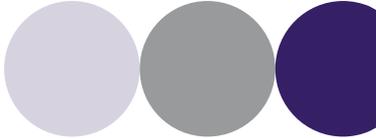
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# Re-Cap: 2025 OD Surgery Legislation

As of December 31st, 2025



-  Ophthalmology Win
-  Partial Win
-  OD Win

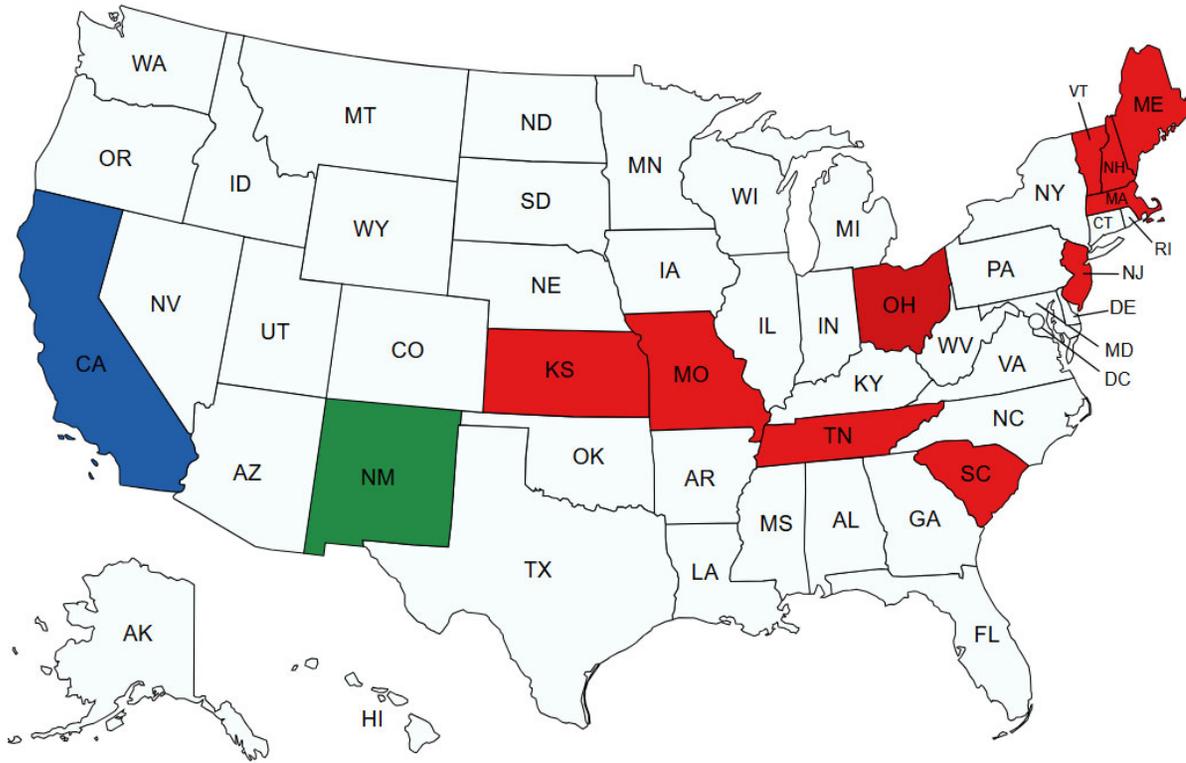
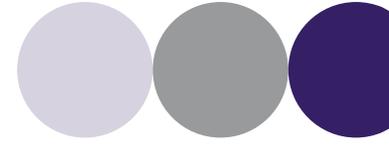


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# 2026 OD Surgery Battle Map

As of Feb. 23rd, 2026



-  Legislation Active/Pending
-  Legislation Possible



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# OD Surgical Wish List



## ➤ Non-Laser

- Removal/Excision of Eyelid Lesions, Chalaza, etc.
  - Injectable Anesthesia
  - Therapeutic/Cosmetic Injections
- 

## ➤ Laser:

- YAG Capsulotomy
- Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT)
- Laser Peripheral Iridotomy (PI)

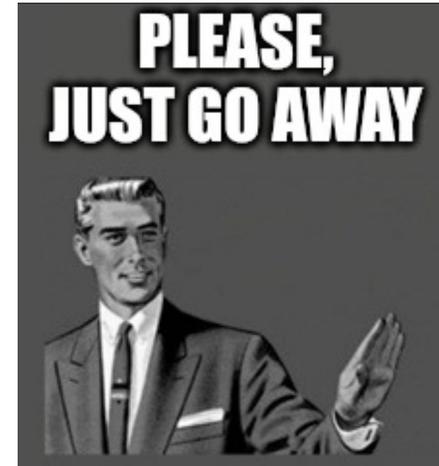
# NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE AND Political Trends

- Mid-levels serving as state legislators
- Mid-levels driving healthcare policy serving as Chairs of key legislative committees (VA, AL, WY, TX)
- Mid-levels coalescing nationally to assist each other, form interstate licensure
- Mid-levels permitted in state medical societies (WY)
- State medical associations refusing to oppose scope expansion (WY)



# National Legislative and Political Trends

- **Legislator Fatigue/Apathy.**
  - Legislators are sick of the issue - losing patience
  - *"You need to compromise...or else we'll do it for you"*
- **Increasing Hostility Towards Organized Medicine**
  - Organized medicine facing "backlash/punishment" from certain political factions
- **Ophthalmologist Fatigue:** Multi-Year battles against aggressive OD political machine increases pressure from legislators to "compromise."



# Keys to Success

## ■ *M.D. Grassroots Engagement*

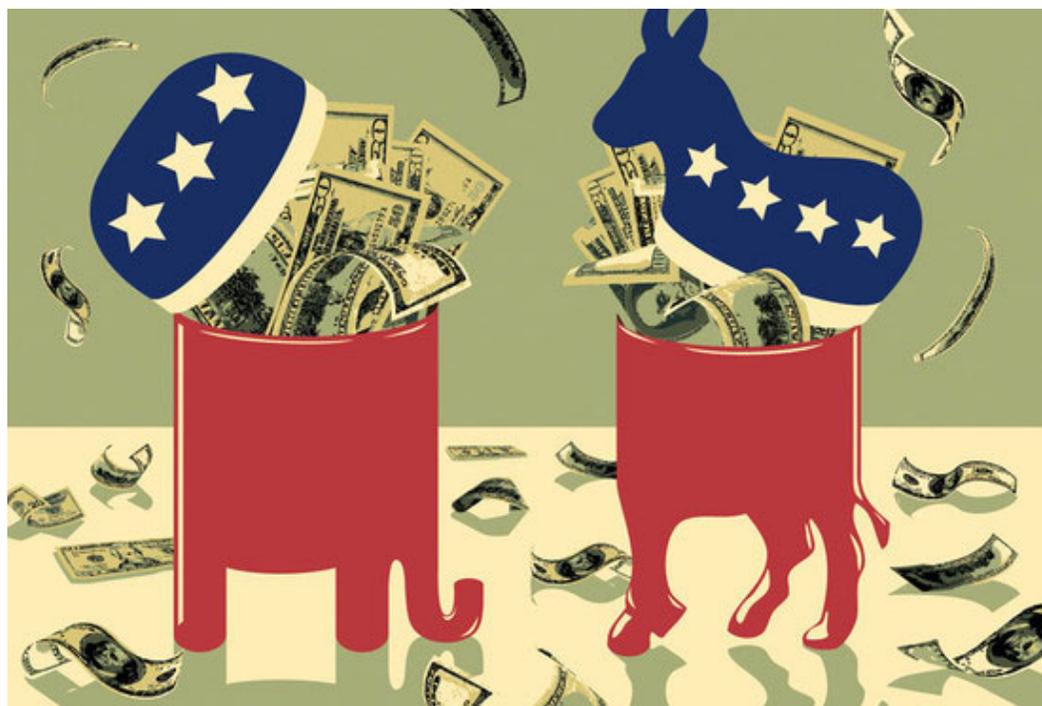
- Political Fundraising
- Building Relationships w/ Legislators
- Phone calls
- Letters
- Media Interviews
- Op-Eds
- Letters to the Editor
- Social Media Engagement



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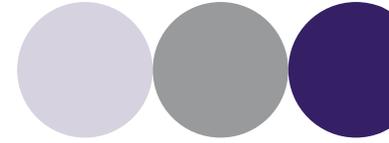
# Political Fundraising



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# Fundraising Comparisons



*“I think I can say that we have some legislatures that bring higher prices than any in the world.” - Mark Twain*

## Optometry



## Ophthalmology



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# Give to the Surgical Scope Fund Today!

*Ensure patient safety and surgical standards are upheld in your state and every state. All donations are 100% confidential.*

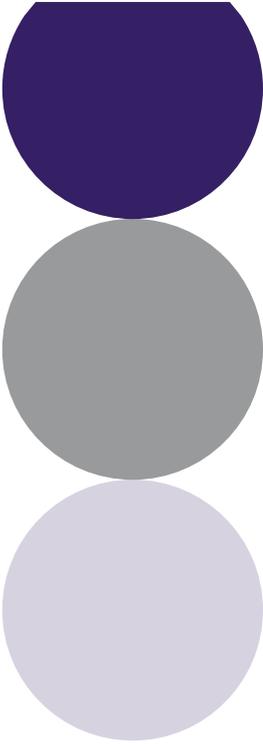
Go to [aao.org/ssf](https://aao.org/ssf) or scan the QR code to give now.



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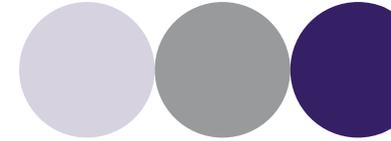


# State Organizational Development



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# Workgroup on State Society Membership

Sid Gicheru, MD, Chair (Texas)  
Associate Secretary for State Affairs

**Todd Baker (Ohio)**

**Joseph Coney, MD (Ohio)**

Anna Luisa Di Lorenzo, MD (Michigan)

Courtney Francis, MD (Washington)

Nanette Gilbertson (Montana)

Ben Harvey, MD (Oklahoma)

Gareth Lema, MD, PhD (New York)

Will Parke, MD (Minnesota)

Rachael Reed (Texas)

Victoria Tseng, MD, PhD (California)

Kimberly Williams, MBA (Indiana)

Dan Briceland, MD, AAO Medical Director  
for State Affairs

Aaron Miller, MD, MBA, former AAO  
Secretary for Member Services (2019-2024)

John Peters, MD, AAO Secretary for State  
Affairs

Peter Quiros, MD, AAO Secretary for  
Member Services

## *Academy Staff Support*

Ophthalmic Society & Global Relations

Lisa Pinkston, Manager

Gail Schmidt, Vice President

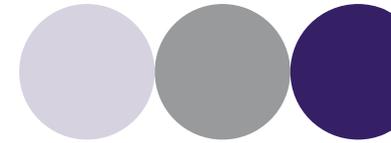
Membership and Alliances

Jessica Kuo, MBA, Vice President



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# Workgroup Results to Date

- Launched an enhanced society dashboard and survey tools (December 2025)

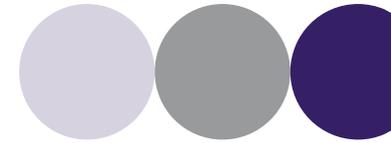
Category	State Organizational Goal/Objective	Notes/Comments/Additional Resources	Examples of societies that successfully implement	What makes the society successful (why/how)
Membership Development	If there are residency programs in-state, the society offers membership to ophthalmologists-in-training and encourages participation by ophthalmologists-in-training in state society programs and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider free membership for ophthalmologist-in-training</li> <li>Consider reduced membership fee for young ophthalmologists who just finished training</li> <li>Introduce residents to their state society during grand rounds, where there is a captive audience.</li> </ul>	Michigan, Pennsylvania	<p>Michigan: Provides one-on-one mentorship, which starts during residency. Resident poster research presentations at annual meeting with prizes for the best talk.</p> <p>Pennsylvania:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statewide Virtual Grand Rounds Competition for residents; promoted via society's YO Instagram account, with attendance open to residents nationwide; program winners were announced, winning 'bragging rights'</li> <li>Free webinar educational program for YOs focusing on "The Business of Ophthalmology"</li> </ul>
Membership Development	The society conducts online surveys, focus groups, etc. among the membership to determine where members' interests lie, and to determine how effective the society is at meeting the needs of its members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At end of educational meeting, survey attendees to learn what topics would be of interest at future programs.</li> </ul>	Texas, Washington	Surveys focused on member interests and ways the society can further engage members/prospective members
Membership Development	The society offers educational programs and/or discounted dues programs for new to practice ophthalmologists, ophthalmologists-in-training, senior ophthalmologists, or other constituent groups of its membership.		Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania	Societies offered popular Lunch and Learn webinar programs which provide valuable content and help cut down on implementation costs for individual state societies
Membership Development	The society undertakes to provide tangible services to members to provide additional value to membership (e.g., discounts on express mail shipments, long-distance telephone service, discounts on insurance, OMIC premium discount, etc.).		California	OMIC premium discount is highlighted as a significant member value, offsetting cost of society dues
Membership Development	The society engages with academic department chairs/program directors to promote engagement with academic ophthalmologists and trainees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department Chairs must value state society membership for themselves and their faculty, before they promote the value of state societies to trainees.</li> <li>Targeted messaging for these groups is necessary because they have different interests, needs, and barriers to engagement</li> </ul>	Washington	Society has strong relationship with academic program

To contact listed state societies to learn more about their programs, visit <https://secure.aao.org/aao/Rosters/State-societies>



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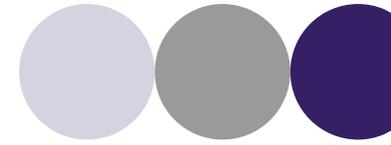
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# Workgroup Results to Date

- Coordinating with the Academy's *Campaign for the Profession* and Academy Communications & Marketing team on ways Academy and state society communication tools might be utilized to
  - Enhance state society communication tools to facilitate more effective communication
  - Facilitate and encourage state society membership and active engagement in state societies
  - Highlight the value that state societies provide for ophthalmologists and our patients
  - Coordinate messaging to the public and the healthcare communities about ophthalmology and eye care





# Workgroup Results to Date

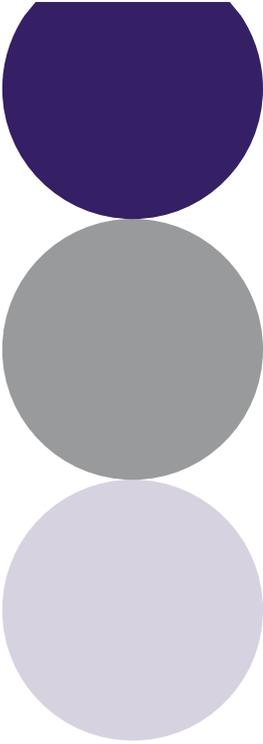
- Identify ways to collaborate with AUPO on better engaging academic ophthalmologists and residents/fellowship trainees with state societies



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# Leadership Development



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# LDP XXVII, Class of 2026

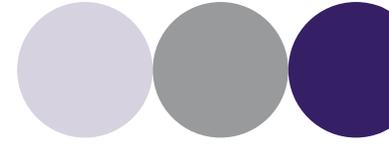
Congrats to OOS' nominee for selection to the Academy's LDP Class of 2026

**Lisa Borkowski, MD**



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# LDP Class of 2026



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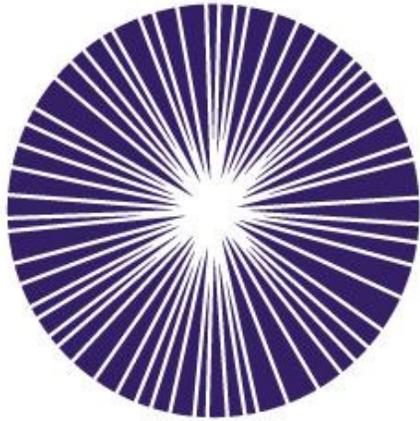
# *New! Michael W. Brennan, MD Award*

- New award to annually recognize the outstanding LDP project
- Named after Academy LDP co-founder Mike Brennan, MD
  - Past President, Past Secretary for State Affairs
  - Global ambassador for LDP
- Inaugural recipient to receive recognition in conjunction with AAO 2026 in New Orleans



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# Thank You!



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