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Advocacy Monthly



Landmark Gun Violence Bill Is Signed into Law

Recently passed by Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden, the [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#) is considered the most sweeping gun reform bill in decades. Several of the provisions within the gun safety package are consistent with positions the Society previously has endorsed, so STS sent a [letter to House and Senate leadership](#), applauding them for passing this important legislation. “The Society supports a multifaceted approach to gun violence prevention to facilitate a long-term solution to a preventable problem,” the letter stated. The comprehensive package will toughen background checks for the youngest gun buyers, bolster mental health programs, keep firearms away from more domestic violence offenders, and facilitate state “red flag” laws that make it easier for authorities to take weapons from people adjudged to be dangerous.

In addition, STS President Dr. John Calhoon [drafted a statement](#) in which he shares his personal reflection on gun violence and his thoughts on the factors contributing to the epidemic of gun violence in the US.

STS Supports Proposed Action Targeting Menthol Cigarettes and Flavored Cigars

Earlier this spring, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued two new rules that, if finalized, would prohibit menthol in cigarettes and flavors in cigars. The Society recently [submitted comments](#) to the FDA on the proposed rules, encouraging the agency to “continue implementing barriers for tobacco companies to appeal to the youth market.” STS has a long-standing commitment to anti-tobacco efforts; more details are available at sts.org/tobaccopaper.

Congress Must Reject Efforts to Weaken FDA Authority over Tobacco Products

Joining more than 60 specialty organizations, STS signed a [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids letter](#) that strongly urged House appropriators to oppose any efforts to weaken the FDA's authority over cigars or any other tobacco products. The letter was sent as the House Committee on Appropriations was readying to mark up the [2023 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill](#).

FDA Considers Ablation Therapy to Treat Certain Lung Cancers

STS [submitted comments](#) on study design considerations for transbronchoscopic thermal ablation (TTA) devices that may be developed to treat intermediate-stage lung tumors known as oligometastases to the lung (OML). Recently, the TTA approach has been proposed as a less invasive treatment for OML that may be associated with lower morbidity. However, there is a lack of consensus on the role of local therapy in the management of OML and how the safety and effectiveness of new therapies such as TTA should be evaluated. In the letter, the Society stressed that "input from thoracic surgeons will play an important role throughout trial design and evaluation."

AHRQ May Receive Its Highest Funding Amount in a Decade

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education released its [fiscal year \(FY\) 2023 spending bill](#), which includes \$385 million in funding for the Friends of AHRQ (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality). This funding amount is a \$35 million increase over FY 2022 and the highest proposed funding for AHRQ in more than 10 years. AHRQ supports research to improve health care quality, reduce costs, advance patient safety, decrease medical errors, and broaden access to essential services.

Advocacy Conference: Registration Is Open, Scholarships Are Available

Just 1 day remains to [apply for a scholarship](#) to attend the STS Advocacy Conference, September 13-14, in Washington, DC. Participants of the 1.5-day event will enjoy a welcome reception and dinner, as well as meetings with STS surgeon leaders, lawmakers, and Congressional staff. Apply by tomorrow, **Friday, July 1**, to be considered for the scholarship, which will cover most expenses during the event—including airfare, hotel accommodations, and meals. [Registration for the event](#) also is open.



RSVP for Exclusive STS-PAC Event

Join STS surgeon leaders and the STS-PAC Board of Advisors on Monday, July 18, from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. ET, for the next event in the [2022 STS-PAC Speaker Series](#). The virtual event will feature Nathan Gonzales, editor and publisher of *Inside Elections*, who will offer an insider viewpoint on the upcoming midterm elections. An [RSVP is required](#) to join the event, which is exclusive to 2022 Platinum-level STS-PAC contributors and 2022 Medical Student and Resident/Fellow STS-PAC contributors.



STS-PAC Speaker Series



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