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Advocacy Monthly



STS Endorses Letters on Gun Violence Prevention, Environmental Health, Loan Repayment, and Climate Issues

The Society has joined dozens of national medical societies, public health groups, and research organizations in sending letters to Congress urging action on the following issues:

Gun Violence Prevention Research—Congressional appropriators were asked to designate \$35 million to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and \$25 million to the National Institutes of Health for gun violence prevention research. [The letter](#) noted that research is needed on many important public health issues, including the best methods to prevent unintended firearm injuries and fatalities among women and children, firearm-related suicides, and shootings at schools or other public places.

Environmental Health—More than \$401 million in funding for the CDC National Center for Environmental Health [was requested](#) for fiscal year 2023. Importantly, the increased support would allow CDC and health departments to conduct cancer studies using CDC guidelines and expand laboratory studies into how exposure to hazardous substances impacts human health.

Loan Repayment—Lawmakers were [urged to support \\$30 million](#) for the Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment Program (PSLRP), which provides physicians with financial incentives to choose careers in pediatric surgery and other subspecialties. PSLRP offers qualifying child health professionals up to \$35,000 in loan repayment annually in exchange for practicing in underserved areas for at least 2 years. This support may help curb a critical workforce shortage in this area; fewer medical students have been pursuing careers in pediatric subspecialties partially due to the additional loans needed for training beyond residency.

Climate Change and Health—House and Senate leaders were asked to provide \$110 million for the CDC Climate and Health Program. According to [the letter](#), increased funding for this program would allow the CDC to fund all states and

territories, improve the program's ability to fill gaps in climate surveillance, and offer more studies and resources on climate change and the consequent health outcomes.

In another [letter to House and Senate appropriators](#), increased funding—for a total of \$11.9 billion—was requested for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA programs save lives and safeguard health, including by improving air quality. From air monitoring networks to pollution standards, every action the agency takes has the potential to impact health.

Prevent BLEEDing Act Introduced in Congress, STS Is Strong Supporter

Earlier this month, the Prevent Blood Loss with Emergency Equipment Devices (BLEEDing) Act was introduced by Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Sen. John Boozman (R-AR) in the Senate and Rep. Tom O'Halleran (D-AZ) and Rep. Brad Wenstrup (R-OH) in the House of Representatives. This bipartisan legislation creates a grant program within the US Department of Health and Human Services to provide anti-blood loss supplies for use in a medical emergency and implement training on bleeding control techniques. The Society has been a longtime supporter of the Prevent BLEEDing Act.

Register for Fall Advocacy Conference

[Registration is open](#) for the Society's Advocacy Conference to be held in Washington, DC, on September 13-14. The 1.5-day event will include a welcome reception and dinner, as well as meetings with STS surgeon leaders, lawmakers, and Congressional staff. Scholarships—covering reasonable travel and meal expenses—are available for STS members. [Apply today!](#) For more information, contact advocacy@sts.org or visit sts.org/advocacyconference.

2022 STS Advocacy Conference



September 13–14
REGISTER NOW



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of Thoracic
Surgeons**

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