



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE MEDICINE

Virtual Lobby Day

The American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine engages in public policy advocacy to advance the field, promote the interests patients and families facing serious illness, and support the health professionals that care for them. As a hospice and palliative care stakeholder, your voice is vital to these efforts – and you don't have to travel to Capitol Hill to make a difference!

Virtual Lobby Day for PCHETA June 15, 2017

Purpose

AAHPM and numerous other palliative care supporters will join together on June 15 to raise the visibility in Congress of the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (PCHETA) and help advance the bill in the legislative process.

How it Works

When congressional offices hear from constituents, they record the contact. If they receive numerous contacts on the same issue, they know the matter is important, and it can rise to the top of the office agenda, making it more likely the member of Congress will make a decision on the matter, for example whether to cosponsor the legislation or push for a markup.

On the pages that follow, AAHPM provides information to help you understand the bill, look up your members of Congress, and access action alerts that make it easy to e-mail and tweet your members of Congress. Please share these details with colleagues, and encourage them to participate in the Virtual Lobby Day!

Need more information or have questions? E-mail AAHPM staff at advocacy@aahpm.org.

Contents of this Guide

PREPARE — Learn About PCHETA & Develop Your Message

ENGAGE — Contact Key Lawmakers via E-Mail & Social Media

FOLLOW-UP — Share Feedback & Thank Supporters

PREPARE

Learn about PCHETA

The Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act (PCHETA) – legislation developed by AAHPM – would expand opportunities for interdisciplinary education and training in palliative care, including through new education centers and career incentive awards for physicians, nurses, physician assistants, social workers and other health professionals. The bill would also implement an awareness campaign, to inform patients and health care providers about the benefits of palliative care and hospice and the services available to support individuals with serious or life-threatening illness, as well as direct funding toward palliative care research to strengthen clinical practice and health care delivery.

Access a [bill summary](#).

The bill number for PCHETA is [S. 693](#) in the Senate and [H.R. 1676](#) in the House of Representatives.

Need to find who represents you in Congress? Use AAHPM's [Legislative Action Center](#). (At the bottom right corner of the home page is a search box that allows you to "Find Your Elected Officials" by your zip code.)

Develop Your Message

Tweeting members of Congress about PCHETA is easy using suggested verbiage provided by AAHPM. (See next page.)

If you'll be e-mailing lawmakers, think about the points you want to make. Reflect on ways that PCHETA would improve access to hospice and palliative care and improve the delivery and quality of care for patients and families facing serious illness. Grassroots advocacy is most effective when you share patient stories and your personal experience on the front lines of health care. Remember: All politics is local... so be sure to localize the benefit where appropriate. Help your elected officials and key congressional leaders understand how this legislation stands to help his/her constituents. (When you use AAHPM's Legislative Action Center to e-mail your members of Congress, you'll find other suggested talking points you can select and copy directly into your message.)

You can also point out that PCHETA enjoys broad support from over 50 organizations, including the Alzheimer's Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, the American Geriatrics Society, the American Academy of Physician Assistants, the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association, the Visiting Nurse Associations of America, the National Association of Social Workers, the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, the National Alliance for Caregiving, the Association of Professional Chaplains, and the Catholic Health Association of the United States.

ENGAGE

Step One – Ask Congressional Leaders to “Mark Up” PCHETA

Last fall, the Health Subcommittee of the House of Representatives’ Energy and Commerce Committee held a hearing on PCHETA. The next step to advancing the legislation is a “markup” of the bill. This is the process by which a committee debates, amends, and rewrites proposed legislation before advancing it to the floor for a vote.

PCHETA Virtual Lobby Day participants are asked to tweet Energy and Commerce Committee chair Greg Walden (R-O -02) and ranking member Frank Pallone (D-NJ-06) to ask them to mark up PCHETA. Contact them on June 15!

- **SEND A TWEET** (*Be sure your account is unlocked and publicly viewable.*)

.@repgregwalden, pls schedule @HouseCommerce markup of #PCHETA. Bipartisan #HR1676 will improve care for patients w/ serious illness. #hpm

.@FrankPallone, pls schedule @HouseCommerce markup of #PCHETA. Bipartisan #HR1676 will improve care for patients w/ serious illness. #hpm

Step Two – Ask Your Elected Officials to Support PCHETA

Use AAHPM’s Legislative Action Center to contact your lawmakers and ask them to cosponsor PCHETA. An [action alert](#) with suggested talking points makes it easy to look up your lawmakers and send a personalized e-mail. If you’re active on Twitter, be sure to follow up your e-mail with a tweet! (Verify your account is unlocked and publicly viewable.) This AAHPM [Twitter action alert](#) makes it simple by providing the Twitter handle for your member of Congress and customizing a sample tweet based on the status of your lawmaker’s support.

Other Tips

If you prefer to write your own tweets or post on Facebook, below are some suggested hashtags. In order for your message to have the greatest reach, mark your posts as “public” on Facebook. On Twitter, your account needs to be unlocked and publicly viewable.

Remember to use hashtags, retweet, and share other great Virtual Lobby Day posts that you see. You can also encourage followers to e-mail their members of Congress by sharing the link to AAHPM’s [Legislative Action Center](#).

Hashtags

Using hashtags on Facebook and Twitter helps other users see similar posts and build momentum. Incorporate these hashtags in your messages to maximize the impact of the Virtual Lobby Day.

#PCHETA	(Legislation hashtag)
#HR1676	(House bill)
@HouseCommerce	(House committee of jurisdiction for PCHETA)
#S693	(Senate bill)
#hpm	(Main hashtag for hospice and palliative care)

FOLLOW-UP

Final Steps

If you receive a response from your member of Congress, let AAHPM know. If the congressional office has questions about the bill you cannot answer, AAHPM's public policy team can help. E-mail advocacy@aaahpm.org.

If your legislator agrees to be a cosponsor of PCHETA, be sure to thank him/her. You can also post a thank you message on Facebook or Twitter.

Follow AAHPM on Twitter ([@AAHPM](https://twitter.com/AAHPM)) and Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/aaahpm/>), and look for e-mail updates or [Connect](#) posts from the Academy for future opportunities to engage in grassroots advocacy.