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Capital Minute

[Click here](#) to register for the next live ACEP Capital Minute on Thursday, June 25th at 3 pm ET. [Click here](#) to submit your questions to be answered live during the Capital Minute.

Introducing the NEMPAC News

In this new section of the Weekly Update, we'll let you know about what's going on with NEMPAC supported candidates and races to watch! To read more about NEMPAC activities in the 2020 elections, [click here](#).

This week, Dr. Rich McCormick, a board-certified emergency physician and ACEP member won the Republican primary election in Georgia's 7th congressional district. NEMPAC supported Dr. McCormick in the primary and will be supporting him in the general election. Dr. McCormick has served as a marine and on the frontlines of COVID-19. He has had firsthand experience with issues of importance to ACEP such as PPE and surprise billing. The general election will be a competitive open seat race. To learn more about Dr. McCormick, [click here](#).

This week in Georgia's 14th district primary, Dr. John Cowan, a neurosurgeon supported by NEMPAC and NeurosurgeryPAC (the American Association of Neurological Surgeons' PAC), advanced to a primary runoff. The Republican primary runoff is scheduled for August 11. This open seat race is rated safely Republican so the winner of this runoff will likely take the general election. Dr. Cowan plans to use his expertise to find solutions for the health care system in Congress. To learn more about Dr. Cowan, [click here](#).

Former Member of Congress, Rep. Pete Sessions is running for election in Texas's 17th congressional district and is being supported by NEMPAC. He advanced to the Republican primary runoff on August 14th. This open seat race is also rated safely Republican and the winner of the runoff will likely win the election. While he was in Congress, he was supportive of ACEP and introduced our EMTALA liability legislation. To learn more about Rep. Sessions, [click here](#).

NEMPAC Charity Match

For the month of June, with just one contribution, you can [support NEMPAC](#) and a charitable cause that provides resources to frontline providers managing the COVID-19 pandemic. Contributions of \$100 or more made to NEMPAC between June 1 – June 30, 2020 will be matched 10 cents on every dollar by ACEP. The more you give, the more we give back. We hope you will take advantage of this incredible opportunity and join your fellow ACEP members to support meaningful political and charitable involvement.

Eligible charities are:

- GetUsPPE.org
- [Emergency Medicine Foundation/COVID-19 EM Research](#)
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

[Click here](#) to make your donation and select a charity!

Rep. Krishnamoorthi Virtual Discussion on Health Care Worker Mental Health

On Wednesday, June 11, Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) hosted a virtual roundtable with health care workers to discuss the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic response on physicians and other frontline health care workers. The conversation centered around the unique challenges posed by providing health care during a pandemic, what mental health resources are available to health care providers, and what barriers or other factors exist that may prevent physicians and other health care workers from seeking mental health treatment.

ACEP was represented on the call by Leslie Zun, MD, who discussed existing barriers that prevent physicians from seeking treatment, including fears regarding potential loss of medical licensure or other reprisals, as well as other systemic challenges. Dr. Zun also highlighted the recent ACEP-led joint statement, "[Supporting Clinician Health in the Post-COVID Pandemic Era](#)," which promotes efforts and changes that will help ensure the wellness of the medical workforce. The event also featured representatives from the American Medical Association, the Illinois Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the Emergency Nurses Association, and The Joint Commission.

As Congress has worked to address the COVID-19 pandemic, Rep. Krishnamoorthi has been a leader on the issue of physician and provider mental health, authoring a [letter](#) with nearly 100 bipartisan signatories. During the call, Rep. Krishnamoorthi announced that he will soon be introducing legislation based on this letter and is working with several Senators to help develop companion legislation that will be introduced in the Senate. ACEP has been working closely with the Congressman and his staff to help inform this legislation and will provide additional updates as these legislative efforts continue.

Federation Advocates for COVID Liability Protections

On Tuesday, ACEP joined the AMA, 65 other national medical societies, and 50 state medical societies to urge the House and Senate leadership to include liability protections for health care providers and entities in the next COVID-19 relief package. We specifically asked that Congress include the protections established in H.R. 7059, the "Coronavirus Provider Protection Act," which ACEP endorsed on June 2.

The legislation is modeled on the volunteer protections that were included in the CARES Act and would:

- Cover services provided during the emergency, as well as 60 days following the termination of the emergency declaration;
- Account for Federal, State, or local guidance or recommendations in response to COVID-19;
- Provide protection for treatment, or lack thereof, due to a lack of resources, including manpower, attributable to COVID-19; and
- Exclude harm as a result of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

To read the Federation letter to congressional leaders, [click here](#).

Senate Committee Examines Federal COVID Procurement and Distribution

On Tuesday, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee held a hearing to evaluate the federal government's procurement and distribution strategies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The federal witnesses included Peter Gaynor, FEMA Administrator; RADM John Polowczyk, Vice Director of Logistics, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Brett Giroir, MD, HHS Assistant Secretary for Health.

Regs and Eggs Blog: HHS Announces Additional Distributions of Provider Relief Funding...But None for Emergency Physicians

Over the last two months or so, ACEP's Director of Regulatory Affairs has described in multiple [Regs & Eggs](#) blogs how the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has been distributing the [Provider Relief Fund](#)—the \$175 billion pot of funding appropriated by Congress to help cover health care providers' increased expenses and lost revenues due to COVID-19. ACEP has had numerous issues with the distribution of the Provider Relief Fund, none of which have been sufficiently resolved. Our primary concern has been that emergency physicians and the groups they work for have thus far only received a small fraction of the amount that they have lost due to your increased expenses fighting the virus and [lower emergency department volumes](#). Earlier this week, HHS [announced \\$35 billion](#) in additional distributions from the Provider Relief Fund—however most, if not all, emergency physicians will NOT be eligible for these funds.

Read the [Regs & Eggs blog](#) to find out more about these distributions and ACEP's advocacy plan going forward to help emergency physicians get the financial support they need during this difficult time.

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