June Advocacy Update
By Lauren DePutter | June 24, 2026

OMB Proposed Federal Grants Rule
AAPM has been coordinating a multi-pronged response to OMB's proposed revisions to the government-wide federal grants and financial assistance framework. The proposal is broader than NIH and could affect federally funded research across agencies, including NIH, NSF, DOE, CDC, and other federal funders.

AAPM's work has included internal analysis, leadership review, member outreach, coalition activity, and preparation of organizational comments. Staff developed background materials explaining the proposal and its potential implications for medical physics research, including possible effects on peer review, active award stability, publication costs and open access fees, journal access, conference travel, trainee and junior investigator support, administrative burden, collaboration, and translation of research into patient care.

AAPM is preparing organizational comments focused on protecting scientific peer review, preserving agency expertise in grantmaking, maintaining award stability, avoiding unnecessary administrative burden, and ensuring that federal grant policy does not undermine federally funded medical physics research. AAPM is seeking input through several internal channels, including GRAC, Science Council, Research Committee, Journal Oversight Committee, and a targeted group of NIH-funded AAPM researchers. Staff also prepared a short backgrounder and Google Form to collect practical examples from medical physics PIs on how the proposed rule could affect federally funded research in practice. AAPM reviewed several coalition sign-on opportunities related to the proposal. AAPM supported a multi-sector request for a 45-day extension of the comment period, an NIH research funding barriers letter, and a society partners letter opposing restrictions on the use of federal funds for research publishing and subscription costs. AAPM had already filed its own extension request, and the broader coalition letter reinforced that position.

AAPM is coordinating with APS on member-facing advocacy related to the proposed OMB grants rule. APS developed an individual-comment platform to help researchers submit comments to OMB in their own voices, rather than relying only on organizational or coalition letters. AAPM is listed as a partner on the APS platform and is sharing the tool with members through the upcoming eNews and AAPM social media, with follow-up planned through Science Council channels. AAPM also reached out directly to a targeted list of NIH-funded member researchers on June 18, with a deadline of June 24 for input via a short Google Form. This effort is intended to increase the number of substantive, individualized comments from researchers who can explain how the proposal could affect grant review, active awards, publication costs, collaboration, trainee support, and the broader federally funded research enterprise.

NIH Strategic Plan
AAPM submitted an organizational response to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Request for Information on the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2027–2031. The response highlighted the role of medical physics in advancing biomedical research, quantitative measurement science, radiation therapy, diagnostic imaging, nuclear medicine, theranostics, artificial intelligence, clinical translation, research workforce development, and improved patient care. AAPM also emphasized the need to strengthen the medical physics research workforce through sustained investment in training, mentorship, research infrastructure, and NIH mechanisms that support interdisciplinary researchers.

NIST / H.R. 2628, American Innovation Act
AAPM continues to advocate for robust FY2027 funding for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), where the administration has proposed significant cuts. NIST's Radiation Physics Division maintains the national radiation measurement standards that underpin the calibration chain used by Accredited Dosimetry Calibration Laboratories, hospitals, cancer centers, and medical physicists to verify that patients receive accurate radiation doses. Staffing and funding limitations are already

constraining the Division's ability to maintain existing standards and develop new ones for emerging technologies, including advanced cancer treatments and radiopharmaceutical therapies.

AAPM is preparing an action center alert and supporting materials urging members to contact their representatives and senators in support of NIST funding and H.R. 2628, the American Innovation Act, introduced by Rep. Bill Foster with a Senate companion from Sen. Dick Durbin. H.R. 2628 would provide sustained annual budget increases (5% above inflation) for five federal science agencies, including NIST's Scientific and Technical Research and Services account, which funds the Radiation Physics Division and other core research programs. The legislation complements the immediate FY2027 appropriations fight by establishing a longer-term investment framework for the scientific infrastructure that supports safe and accurate clinical technology.

Rep. Foster's office expressed interest in AAPM's NIST concerns during a June 3 meeting with Capitol Associates, providing an opportunity to reinforce the connection between NIST's radiation measurement programs and patient safety.

Congressional Outreach / CAI Activity

Capitol Associates has continued congressional outreach on AAPM priorities, including the VA Medical Physicist Pay Cap Relief Act (H.R. 3489). Recent congressional activity included the following meetings:

- Rep. Bill Foster office: Discussed H.R. 3489 and AAPM's broader priorities, including H-1B, NIST funding, and federal research policy. Rep. Foster's office expressed interest in cosponsoring the legislation. He is the only physicist in Congress
- Rep. Ciscomani office: Discussed H.R. 3489.
- Rep. Janelle Bynum office: Discussed H.R. 3489 and the role of medical physicists in VA care.
- Rep. Bill Foster office: Follow-up meeting on H.R. 3489, building on the June 3 engagement.
- Rep. Gabe Vasquez office: Discussed H.R. 3489.

Follow-up is ongoing with Rep. Foster's office. This outreach supports AAPM's continued work to address federal workforce and compensation issues affecting VA medical physicists and to maintain congressional awareness of the medical physics workforce.

Find It Early Act

AAPM developed action center materials supporting the Find It Early Act (S. 1410), bipartisan legislation sponsored by Sens. Klobuchar and Marshall in the Senate and Reps. DeLauro and Fitzpatrick in the House. The bill would require insurance coverage for comprehensive breast imaging, including supplemental screening, without cost-sharing.

Materials include a constituent letter for members to contact their representatives and senators urging them to cosponsor the legislation, and thank-you letter templates for members whose representatives sponsor or cosponsor the legislation. The action center framing highlights the role of medical physicists in ensuring that breast imaging technologies are accurately calibrated, properly tested, and capable of identifying cancer at its earliest stages, and notes that cost barriers for supplemental screening undermine the clinical value of that work.

PQM Scientific Methods Panel Nomination

AAPM submitted a nomination for Douglas E. Pfeiffer, MS, DABR, FACR, FAAPM, to serve on the Partnership for Quality Measurement's Scientific Methods Panel. The nomination emphasized the importance of medical physics expertise in evaluating the scientific acceptability of quality and cost/resource use measures, particularly where measures involve imaging performance, radiation dose, data quality, technical feasibility, and implementation in clinical settings.

The nomination also positioned AAPM as a relevant stakeholder in measure development and evaluation, especially as federal quality programs increasingly intersect with medical imaging, radiation safety, and clinical workflow.

NRC Byproduct Material Rule

AAPM is finalizing comments on NRC's proposed changes related to byproduct material regulation. The review has focused on ensuring that NRC's proposed framework reduces unnecessary administrative burden without creating new confusion or duplicative compliance structures for medical facilities. Key issues under review include the proposed SGL pathway, how that pathway would interact with existing specific licenses, whether large hospitals and multi-site health systems would face duplicative registration or audit requirements, and whether certain medical-use materials should be included in or excluded from the proposed SGL categories.

AAPM's draft position generally supports burden reduction and modernization, while asking NRC to clarify how any new pathway would be integrated into existing radiation safety programs and specific licenses. Staff attended the June 8 public meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes (ACMUI) as part of ongoing engagement with the NRC regulatory process.

CRCPD / SSR Part F Comments

AAPM completed comments on CRCPD's proposed revisions to Suggested State Regulations Part F. This was a significant regulatory review project because Part F addresses medical diagnostic and interventional X-ray requirements that can influence how state radiation control programs regulate imaging practice.

AAPM's review focused on ensuring that the model language remains technically accurate, clinically workable, and aligned with the role of qualified medical physicists in patient safety, equipment performance, quality assurance, and radiation protection. The comments addressed areas where the draft language could benefit from clarification, greater consistency, or more flexible implementation by state programs.

The comments also supported AAPM's broader state regulatory strategy by reinforcing the importance of technically sound state rules, appropriate recognition of medical physics expertise, and regulatory language that protects patients without creating unnecessary operational burden for imaging facilities.

H-1B / Immigration Workforce Issues

Two notable developments since the last update. On June 8, a federal district court blocked the administration's $100,000 H-1B employer fee on separation-of-powers grounds; an appeal is anticipated, and AAPM is monitoring. Earlier, during a Senate Appropriations Committee hearing, Chair Collins pressed DHS Secretary Mullin on H-1B fees affecting physician hiring, and Secretary Mullin acknowledged that some flexibility may be needed. Capitol Associates followed up with Senator Collins's office to ensure medical physicists are included in any flexibility discussions. Capitol Associates also pursued a DHS Appropriations amendment opportunity with Rep. Ciscomani's office that would have extended H-1B fee relief to STEM fields involved in patient care; no amendment was offered, and outreach is ongoing. AAPM continues to work through ACR, ASTRO, and relevant coalitions on immigration issues affecting the medical physics workforce.

AIMBE Congressional Briefing — ARPA-H

On May 28, AAPM staff attended AIMBE's Congressional Lunch Briefing on Capitol Hill focused on ARPA-H. The briefing featured ARPA-H Director Alicia Jackson, Chief Medical Officer Rafid Fadul, and two AIMBE Fellows serving as ARPA-H performers, discussing the agency's mission, funding model, and priorities in biotechnology, aging, and disease. Attendance supported AAPM's broader effort to monitor the federal biomedical research funding landscape, including the role of ARPA-H as a potential funding source for medical physics research and technology development, and to maintain awareness of coalition activity through AAPM's participation in the AIMBE Council of Societies.