

Advocacy 101

What Residents Need to Know

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Overview

- **Council on Government and Professional Affairs**
- **Now and Future Policy Agenda**
- **Deciphering the Health Policy Language**
- **Medicare Payment Basics**
- **Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA)**
- **Getting Involved in Advocacy: PathNET, PathPAC, and beyond**



Welcome

Emily E. Volk, MD, MBA, FCAP

- **Chair, Council on Government and Professional Affairs (CGPA)**
- **Member, PathPAC Board**



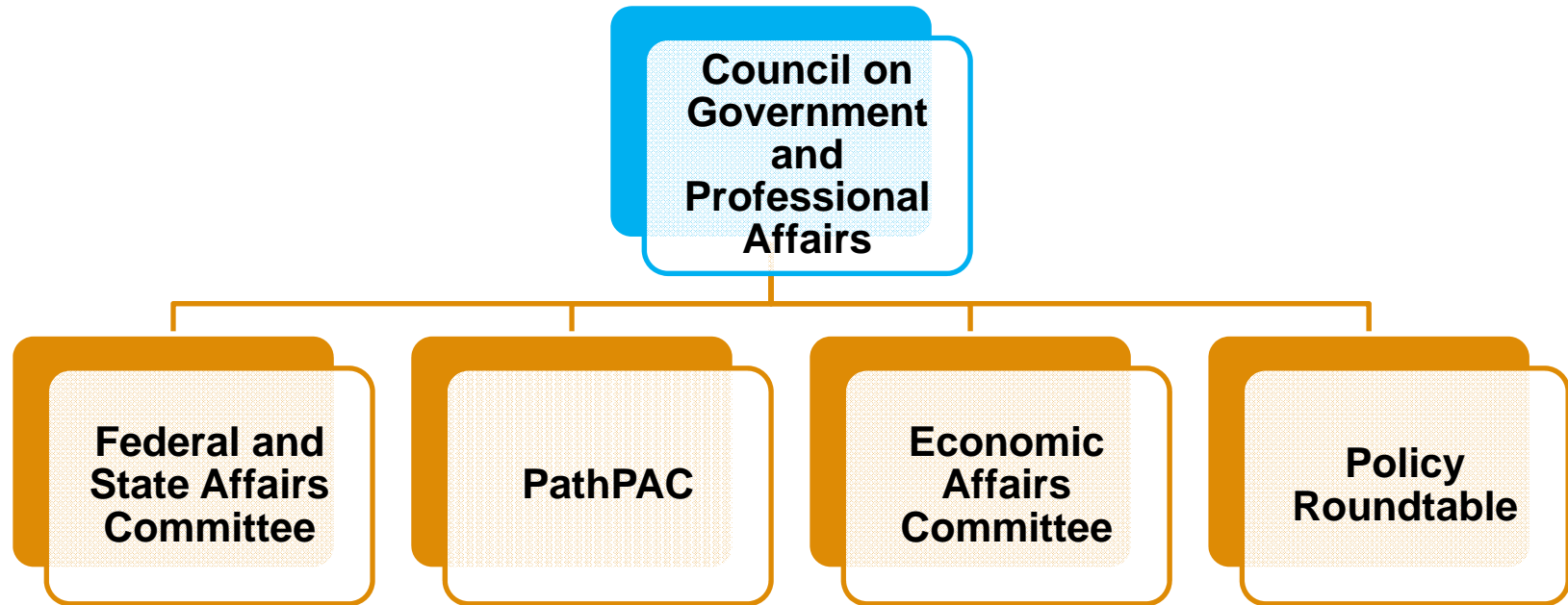
Welcome

Joe Sanfrancesco, MD

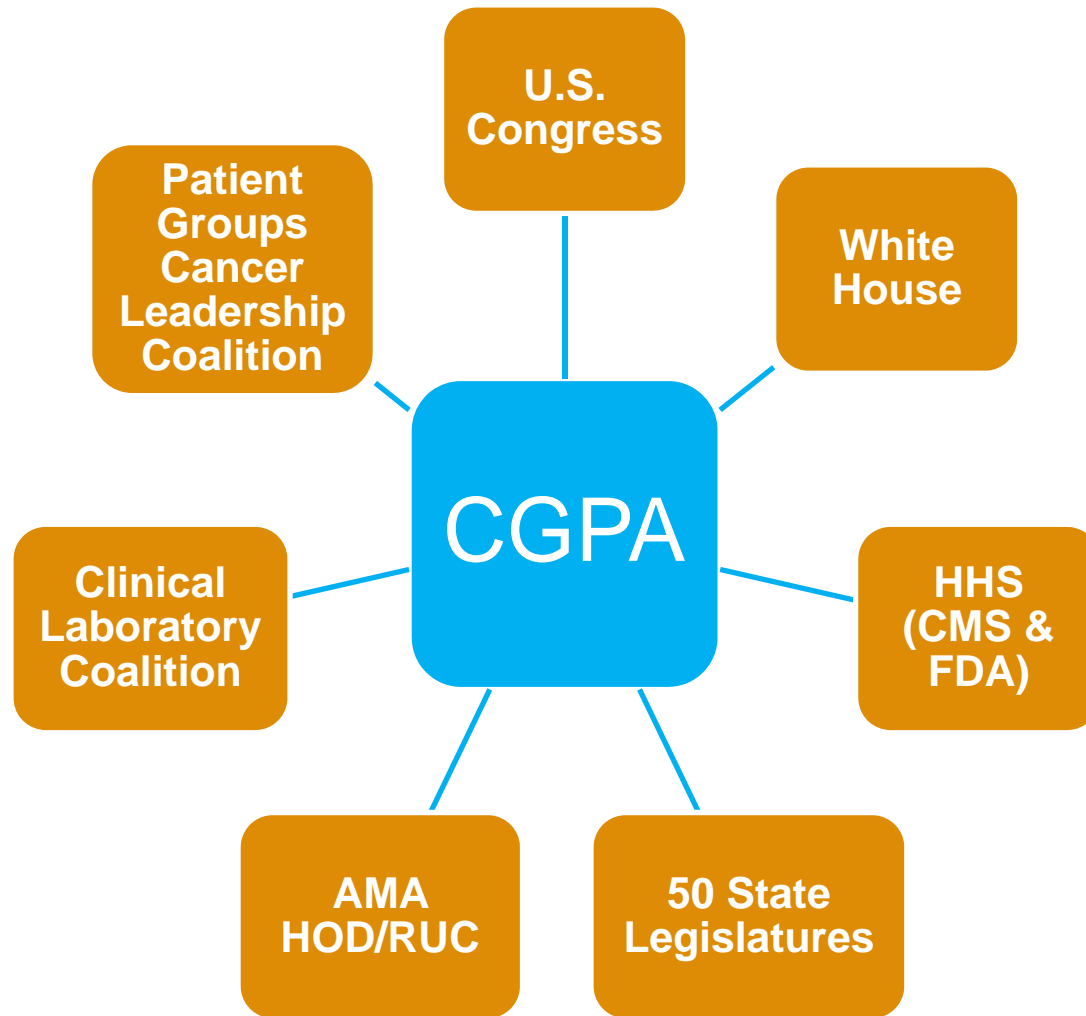
- **CAP Residents Forum
Executive Committee Member**
- **Former Resident Member of
CGPA and Policy Roundtable**



Council on Government and Professional Affairs



CGPA Responsibilities



CGPA Now and Future Policy Agenda

**Protect the
value of
pathology
services**

**Ensure
pathologists
can adapt to
the new
value based
payment
models**

**Sustain a
favorable
laboratory
regulatory
environment**



Major Health Care Reform Bills

HITECH 2009

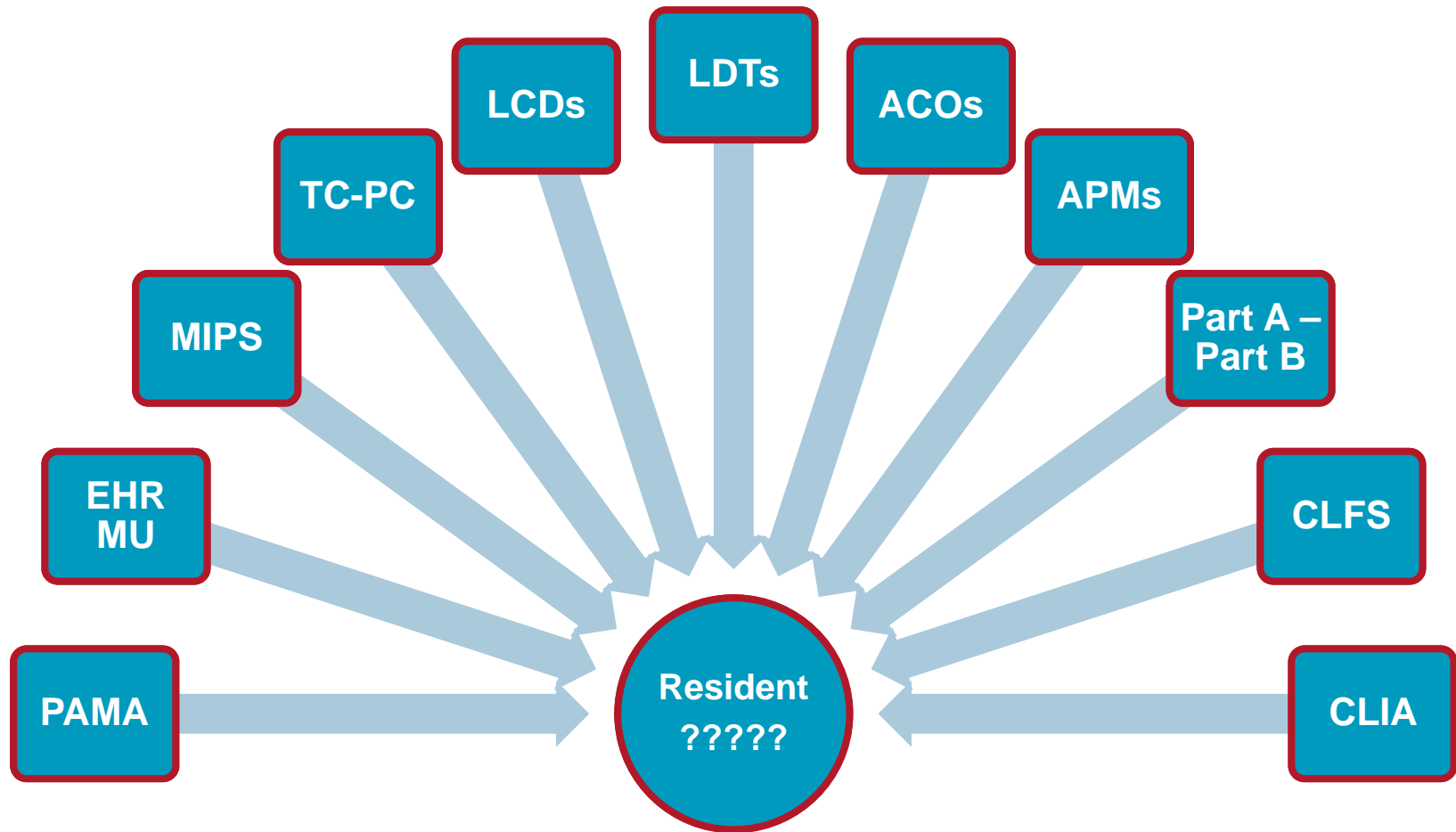
ACA 2010

Drivers of Health
Policy Agenda

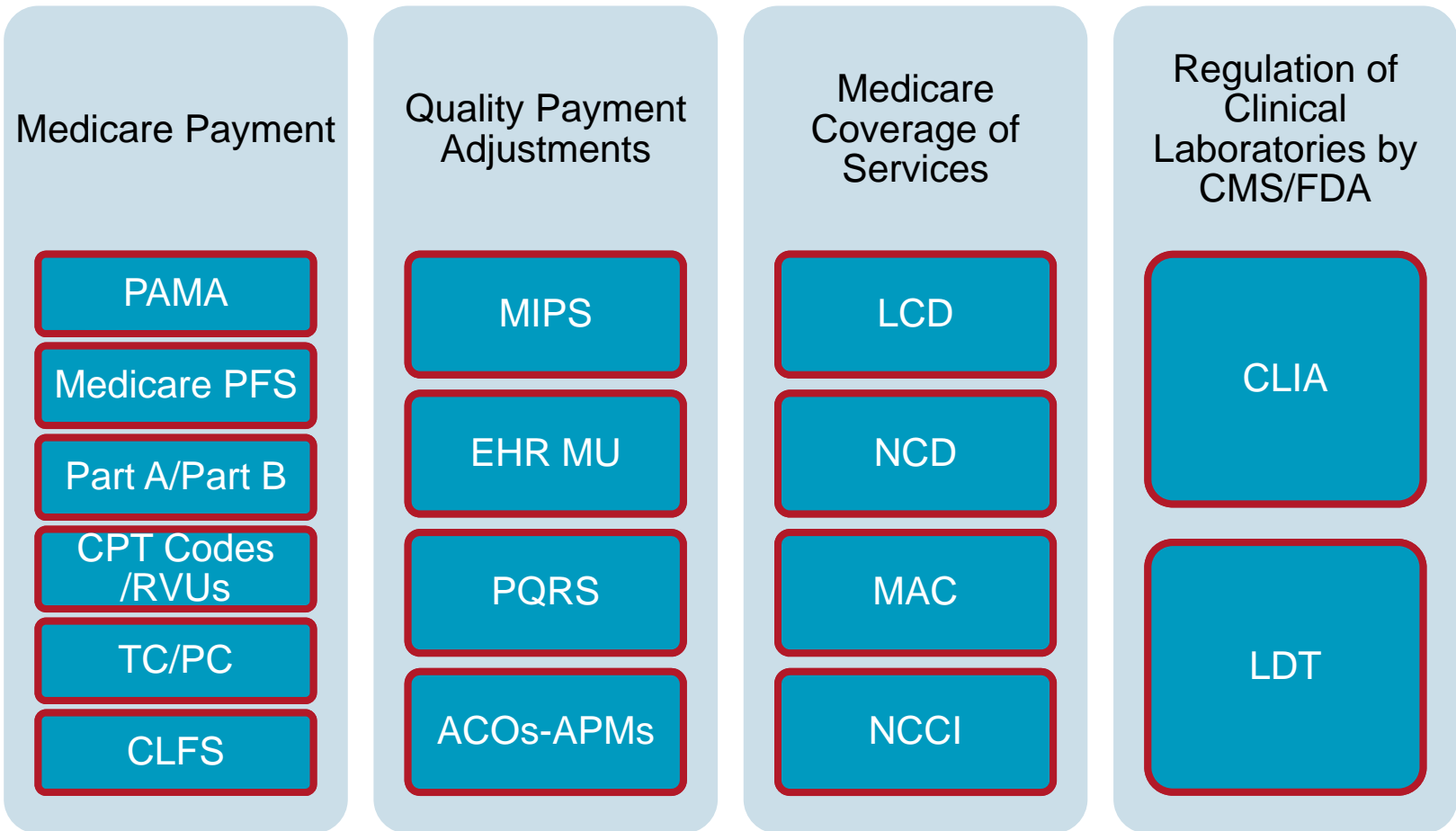
PAMA 2014

MACRA 2015

Health Policy Language Can Be Intimidating...

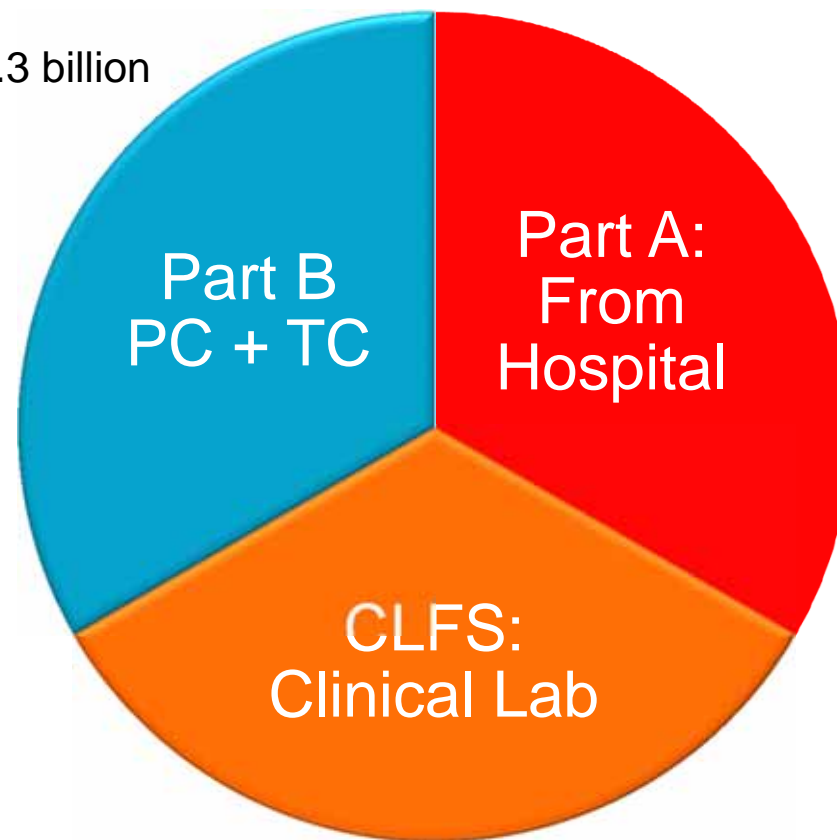


Deciphering and Demystifying the Language

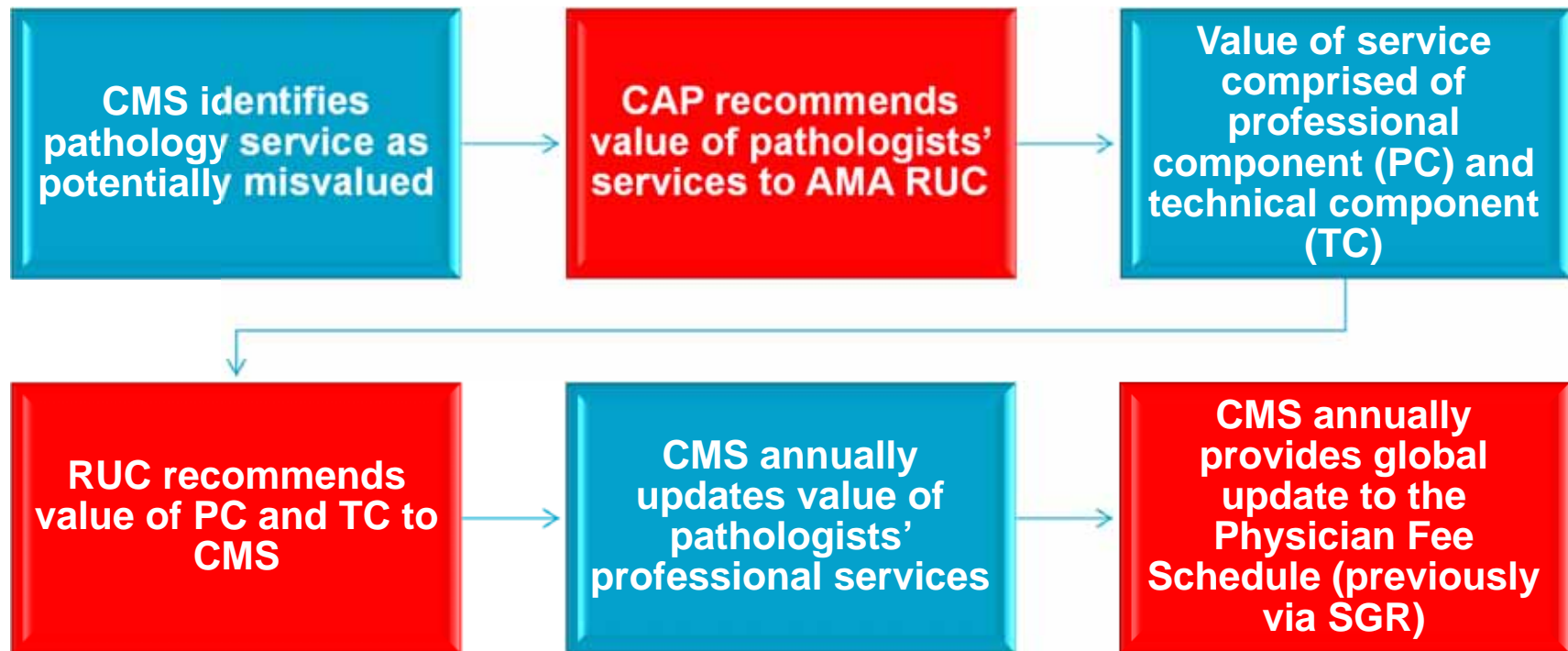


Medicare Physician Payments to Pathologists: Understanding The Basics

Total Medicare Part B
Payment to all
Pathologists = \$2.3 billion
in 2016



Medicare Physician Payments to Pathologists: Understanding The Basics




CGPA Now and Future Policy Agenda

**Protect the value of
pathology services**

**47% of pathology CPT codes
have been targeted by CMS
since 2006**

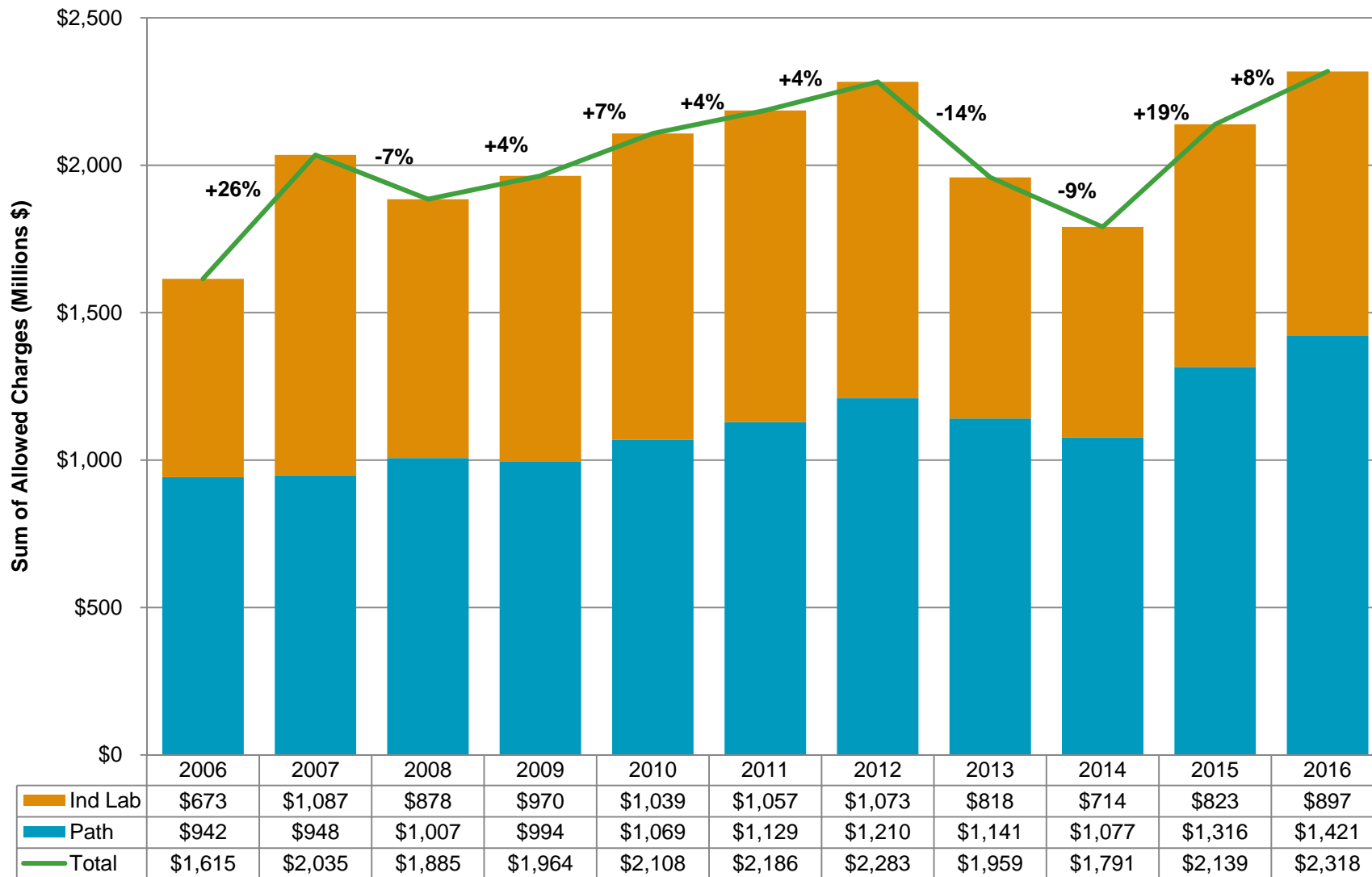




Medicare payments for pathology codes by CMS increased 51% since 2006



Pathologists' Medicare Professional Payments 2006-2016



Proposed 2017 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Released on July 7

- **CMS proposed increases sought by the CAP for pathology services**
 - Pathology add-on services
 - Microslide consultations
 - Prostate G-code
 - Tumor immunohistochemistry
- **CMS proposed decreases to some services**
 - Flow Cytometry professional and technical component
 - Anatomic pathology technical component

Proposed Professional Component Payment for Pathology Add-on Services

- **Due to the CAP's advocacy, the CMS again increased the value of add-on services for immunohistochemistry, immunofluorescence studies, and in situ hybridization**
 - **This proposed policy change represents a \$2.93 million increased payment to pathologists based on Medicare volume**
 - **\$2.75 million of this impact is attributed to CPT code 88341**

CGPA Now and Future Policy Agenda

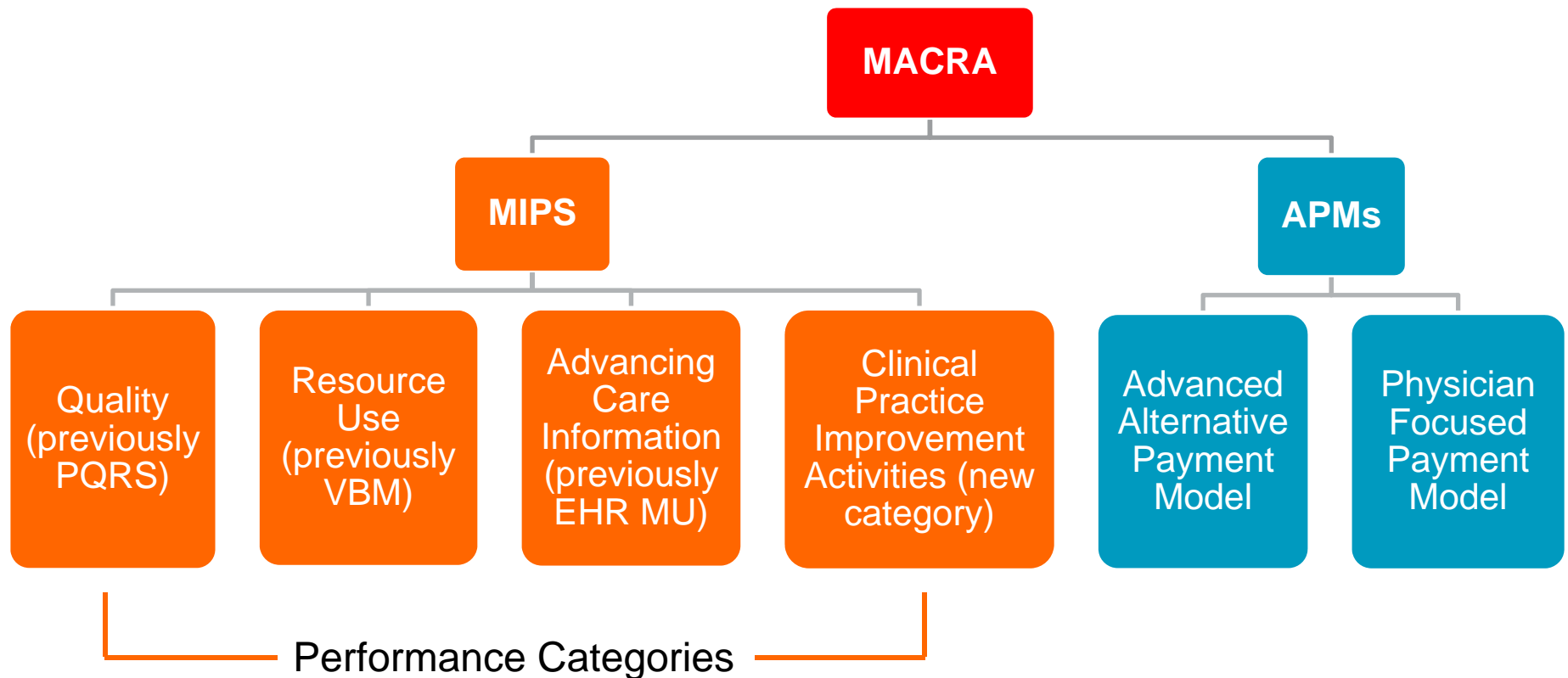
Ensure pathologists can adapt to the new value based payment models

Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA)

- **Ended the broken Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula**
- **Established a new framework for rewarding health care providers for giving better care not more just more care**
- **Combined existing Medicare quality reporting programs (PQRS, VBM, and EHR MU) into one new system (Merit-based Incentive Payment System, or MIPS)**
- **MIPS effective in 2019, existing programs remain in place until then**

Pathways Under MACRA

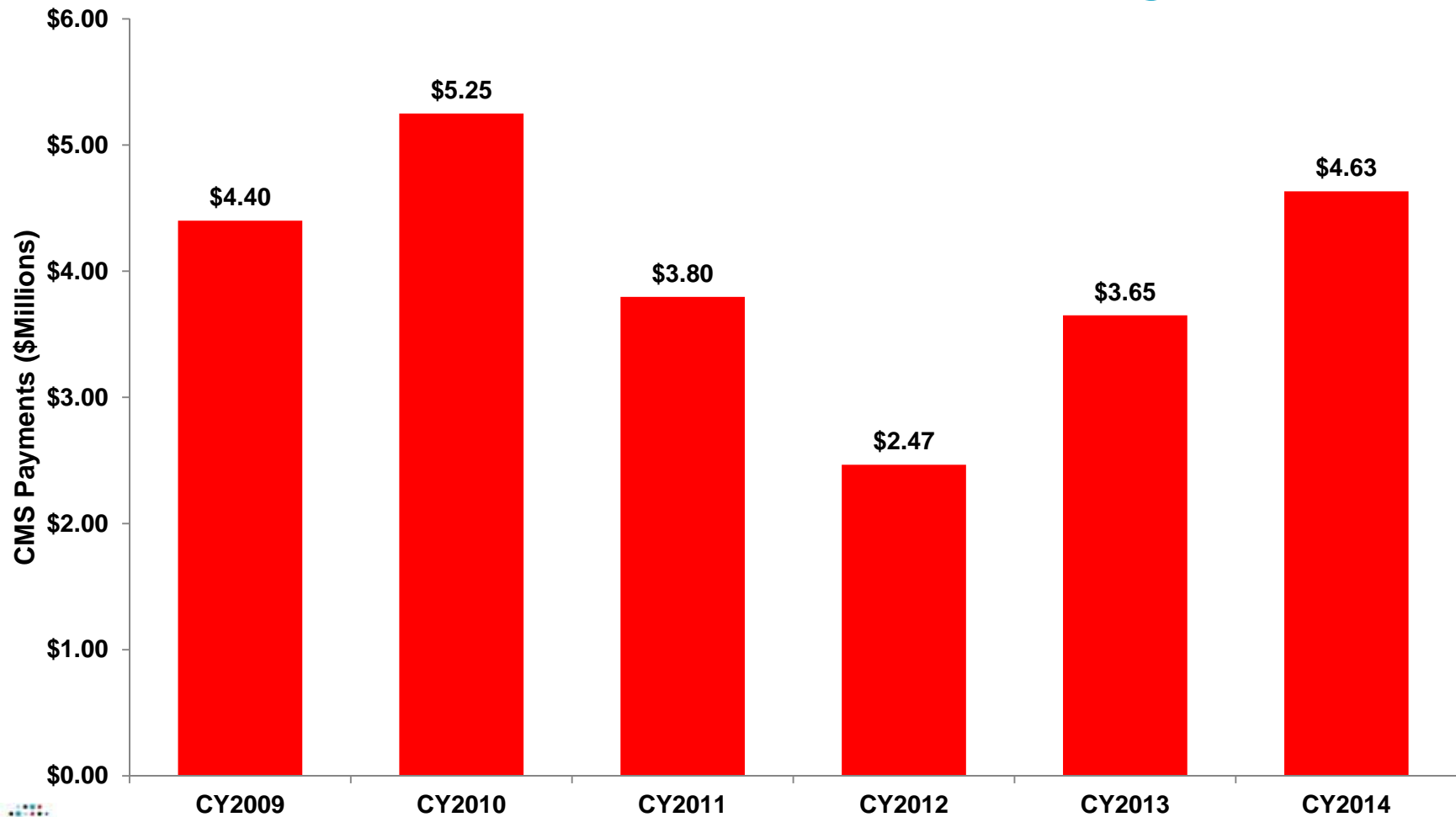
Two pathways/tracks are offered under MACRA:



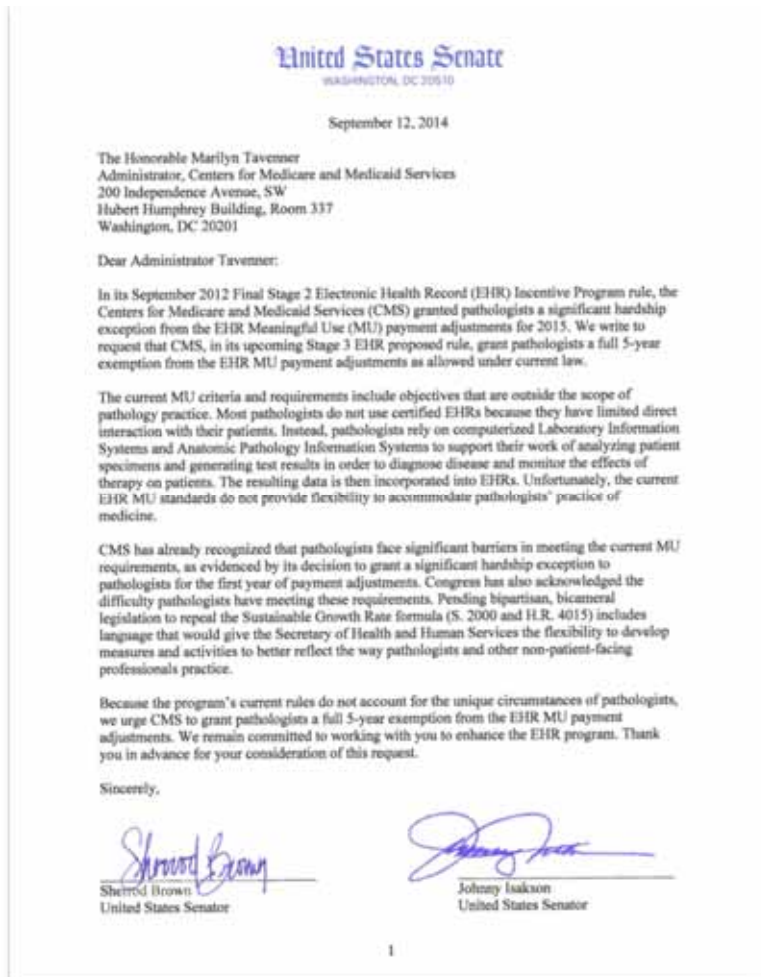
**In 2015, pathologists avoided
\$13.5 million in PQRS
penalties by using CAP-
developed measures for
pathology**



EAC Measure Creation Successes: PQRS Bonuses Paid to Pathologists

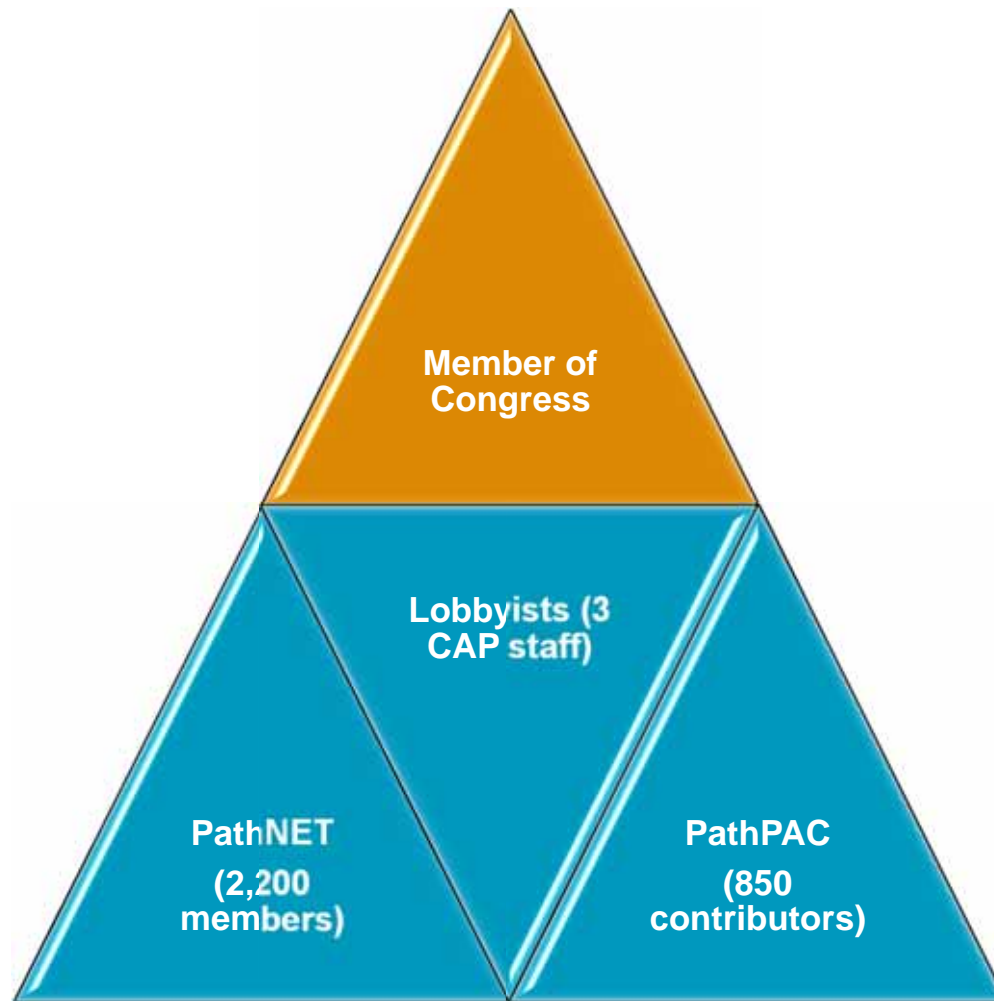


Securing Relief from EHR/MU Penalties



- Grassroots and lobbying efforts from CAP to secure relief for pathologists
- In 2014, more than 100 members of Congress urged CMS to provide pathologists permanent relief from any EHR/MU penalties
- In 2015 and 2016, CMS provided relief from penalties

Pathologists: Foundation of CAP Advocacy



Why Get Involved?

- **Regardless of what setting you practice in, advocacy matters**
- **Legislation and regulations impact much more than just payment**
- **If we don't speak for our profession, no one else will**

What is PathNET?

- **Grassroots advocacy network of CAP members who:**
 - Advocate for patients and our profession
 - Tell our story
 - Build relationships with legislators
- **Access to tools and resources to help you become an effective advocate**



PathNET Opportunities for Engagement

Tier 1: Grassroots Advocate Level

- Action Alerts
- Social Media
- Letters to the Editor
- PathNET Recruitment
- Join State Pathology Society

Tier 2: Grassroots Activist Level

- Lab Tour
- In-District Meetings
- Town Hall Meetings
- State Path Society Leadership

Tier 3: Grassroots Ambassador Level

- Fly-In
- Policy Meeting
- Attend Fundraiser
- Health Care Advisory Committee



PathNET's Impact: Case Example

- **In 2013, CMS proposed to drastically reduce 39 pathology services for 2014 Physician Fee Schedule**
- **PathNET went to work, generating:**
 - **Over 4,900 emails to Capitol Hill**
 - **10,200 comments to CMS**
 - **Over 40 face-to-face meetings in DC with members of Congress and over 40 face-to-face meetings in-district meetings with members of Congress**
- **Result: 113 members of the House and 40 members of the Senate sent letters to CMS opposing the proposed cuts**
- **Outcome: CMS withdrew its proposal**



What is PathPAC?

- **Political action committee solely dedicated to representing pathologists at the federal level**
- **Allows pathologists the opportunity to amplify their voice in Washington by engaging in the political process**
- **Positions us to protect the relationships we build with elected officials**



PathPAC Contribution Guidelines

- **Hard money (individual, non-corporate funds)**
 - Direct candidate support
 - \$5,000 maximum per calendar year
- **Soft money (corporate funds)**
 - Political Education Fund (PEF)
 - Unlimited amount per calendar year
 - Activities in support of the Policy Meeting, Fly-Ins, grassroots training, etc.
- **All PathPAC and PEF contributions are done on a voluntary basis by CAP members**



Common Misconceptions

- **“Why can’t the CAP just pay for this?” / “I pay dues and attend the annual meeting, why not use that money?”**
- **“I’m a Democrat/Republican and I love/loathe Congressman X.”**
- **“I don’t have a lot of money.”**

How Do I Give to PathPAC?



**Contribute
online via
the e-store**



**Check
payable to
PathPAC or
Political
Education
Fund (PEF)**



**Fill out a
contribution
form**

Policy Meeting and Annual Hill Day

- **Engage with health care policymakers and CAP leaders and policy experts**
- **Learn about the regulatory and legislative challenges facing the specialty**
- **Advocate for your profession by meeting with members of Congress on Capitol Hill**

Policy Meeting and Annual Hill Day

- **Since 2012, 705 Hill visits to members of Congress**
- **Issues lobbied: SGR, Self-Referral, EHR-MU, Graduate Medical Education, LCD Reform**
- **Results:**
 - **SGR repealed**
 - **MACRA contains language regarding flexibility for non-patient-facing physicians**
 - **EHR-MU penalties not applied to pathologists**
 - **LCD legislation introduced in House**
- **Message: Grassroots political activism works!**



State Pathology Societies

- **Valuable strategic alliances for advocacy efforts – independent from CAP but often work closely together**
- **Issues often start in the states – ability to influence legislation at the state level is vital to success at the national level**
- **State legislators are the next Congressmen and Senators – begin to build relationships early in their careers**

AMA Membership

- **AMA delegates are apportioned based on primary specialty designation**
- **Robust delegate representation ensures the CAP's leadership role in the Pathology Section Council**

The Future Belongs to You!

Begin to Invest in Your Profession Today

- **Become a PathNET Grassroots Advocate**
- **Become a PathPAC supporter**
- **Attend the 2017 Policy Meeting and Annual Hill Day**
 - **April 24-26, 2017, Washington, DC**
- **Join your State Pathology Society and the AMA**
- **Attend the Advocacy workgroup at the upcoming Residents Forum meeting**
 - **September 24, 2016, Las Vegas, NV**



CAP

Stay Informed Through the CAP

- **Follow CAP on social media**
 - **Twitter @Pathologists**
 - **Facebook.com/capathologists**
- **Visit CAP.org > advocacy**
- **Read STATLINE**



Questions?





COLLEGE of AMERICAN
PATHOLOGISTS

