Our Legislative Committee is made up of representatives from each state that we have member camps in. The committee meets twice a year to discuss important legislative issues happening in each state. Below is a brief summary of the major issues that you should be aware of.
Maine

Reported by Peter Hirsh, Camp Androscoggin

Most of Maine's efforts revolved around the Governor's tax reform proposal, submitted to the Legislature in January, which called for service fees on certain non-profits, including camps, and an expansion of the sales tax to cover recreational services, potentially including camp tuition. We also continued to help ACA-NE and National monitor the issues with the Federal DOT and worked with State legislators on a bill allowing camp staff to administer epipens to campers who do not have a prescription and another expanding a counselor's reporting responsibilities as a child care provider.

Massachusetts

Reported by Billy Hoch, Camp Watitoh

The major issue with Massachusetts is the ongoing formulation of regulations pursuant to "Christian's Law," the statute requiring camps to identify non-swimmers and at-risk swimmers and to provide life jackets for all swimmers who fit those categories or otherwise request one. Finalization of new regulations has been delayed while the new administration that took office in 2015 reviews the various issues. We hope to have more information to report out to member camps by early spring. PAID SICK LEAVE - Regulations were issued regarding the accumulation of sick leave among all employees, including camp counselors and counselor trainees. MCA was able to get several issues addressed in the regulations, including limits on carry over hours during a break in service for workers with less than 300 hours worked, and the requirement of a doctor's note for absences during the last two weeks of the season, and parental verification for employees under 17 years old who miss work. MCA also helped the Attorney General's office understand the potential for abuses that could take place under the new right to sick time by young staff looking for an excuse to take the day off, which subsequently resulted in the AG's office commitment and effort to address the concern.

New Hampshire

Reported by Greg Pierce, Camp Birchmont

Bills in committee that more than likely will not get out to a vote are:
1. There is a bill to increase the minimum wage but it's not getting any traction.
2. A bill limiting the number of water skiers that one boat can pull.
3. A bill requiring boat inspections in regard to invasive aquatic species at boat ramps into lakes and rivers, currently a voluntary regulation.
Pennsylvania

Reported by Mark Zides, Camp Towanda

HB 1276 (regarding background checks) was amended in late June after significant discussion from legislators supporting the changes...PACA was instrumental in developing support and changes in the language of the bill. Some of the changes that affect camps are below:
- First-time camp staff with J-1 visas need not get the clearances
- Employees only need the FBI clearances once every 5 years
- PA clearances are good for 3 years
- Employees under the age of 18 will be exempted from FBI certifications if they have lived in the Commonwealth for 10 years and their parents sign an affirmation they have not been convicted of any crimes
- Would allow out-of-country employees who work less than 90 days in a year, have received a J-1 visa, have not worked in the commonwealth before and affirms they have not been convicted of a crime that would disqualify them
- Reduces the cost of the FBI and State Clearances from $10 to $8 There is currently a bill in progress dealing with Epi Pen legislation.

Summary: The Epinephrine Auto-Injector Entity Act permits certain entities, including summer camps, colleges and universities, restaurants, amusement parks, sport facilities, daycares and other facilities, to house non-patient specific epinephrine auto-injectors in their facilities. Provides for training of employees as required by the Department of Health and for Good Samaritan protections.

PACA, it’s lobbyist and legislators have expressed their opinions that camps go above and beyond the requirements of the bill....and that our nurses have been training staff in its use.

A point of contention with the bill relates to Epi Pen prescriptions.

Currently our staff may help/administer an epi-pen to a particular camper who has a prescription and needs it, and that isn’t changed. Camp staff would only need the training offered by the PA Department of Health if the camp decided it wanted to have a supply of un-prescribed epi pens in case a camper without a prescription may need one.

Dialogue will continue regarding all aspects of the bill.
Join PACA to learn more...
New York

Reported by Doug Volan, Mt. Tom Day Camp, Chair of Committee

The Department of Health is proposing new regulations for next summer that would impose certain requirements previously imposed on camps that enroll 20% or more of its campers with developmental disabilities to all camps that enroll a single camper with a developmental or physical disability. The New York State Camp Directors Association (NYSCDA) is actively monitoring the situation and working with DOH, the Camp Safety Advisory Council and legislators to ensure camps have feedback and input in the process before the regulations are promulgated.

The Department of State recently proposed regulations that require the owners of commercial buildings to install carbon monoxide alarms. The definition of a commercial building is extremely broad and includes structures like dining halls. The alarms must either be battery powered by a 10 year battery or wired into the commercial building it serves with a backup battery power source. The alarms must comply with UL -2034 (the publication entitled "Single and Multiple Station Carbon Monoxide Alarms" published by the Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., publication date: February 28, 2008).

The Department of State does not possess a list of UL -2034 approved carbon monoxide alarms, but the packaging of carbon monoxide alarms should have a UL logo and include a statement indicating that the carbon monoxide alarm complies with UL-2034. Commercial buildings built in 2015 or in the future will be required to have a carbon monoxide detection system - not a carbon monoxide alarm. Please know that this regulation has not been adopted yet. However, summer camps should comply with this pending rule. Lastly, for summer camps that serve as day schools in the off season, there are additional requirements that need to be met within the regulations. Specifically, each classroom that includes a carbon monoxide producing HVAC duct will require a carbon monoxide detection alarm/system.

Camp Epinephrine bills: These bills would authorize a youth camp to obtain an "entity" prescription for an epinephrine auto-injector in the name of the camp to keep as stock. The bill provides guidelines on how to train and delegate personnel at the camp to administer.

S2201 - Senate Health unanimously approved - passed Senate
A3273 - needs to be scheduled for Assembly Health Committee (after election)

AED Bill (VETOED)
A3500 / S1973 - ABSOLUTE VETO by Governor Christie These bills required local recreation departments and youth serving organizations (including youth camps) to have defibrillators for youth athletic events. NJCGAP successfully had the bill amended to reflect the ACA Standard on AEDs at youth camps.