



Welcome to *Washington Update*, the weekly e-newsletter on the latest health care happenings in the nation's capital that affect APG's members.

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Reproductive Health Issues Dominate Democratic National Convention

With Congress out on its annual August recess, much of the attention this week focused on the Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Chicago, where reproductive health issues took center stage – practically in inverse proportion to the relative quiet on similar issues at the [Republican National Convention](#) last month.

A common theme struck by multiple speakers at the DNC has been “reproductive freedom,” with Wednesday night speaker [Oprah Winfrey](#) declaring, “If you cannot control when and how you choose to bring your children into this world...there is no American dream.” Other convention speakers recounted how their states’ laws restricting abortion thwarted emergency abortions following miscarriage or physicians’ diagnoses of fetal non-viability.

Candidates’ Views: In her speech accepting the Democratic nomination for President Thursday night, Vice President Kamala Harris reiterated her support for legislation codifying the protections of *Roe v. Wade* into federal law. “Donald Trump hand-picked members of the United States Supreme Court to take away reproductive freedom,” she said. “And understand – he is not done.” She referred in particular to plans to create a “national anti-abortion coordinator,” an apparent reference to a provision of the Heritage

Foundation's [Project 2025](#) policy proposals, which Trump has [disavowed](#).

In his own acceptance speech on Wednesday night, Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee Tim Walz attacked some Republicans' opposition to in vitro fertilization, which anti-abortion groups seek to bar. Senate Republicans also voted in June to [block passage](#) of a Democratic backed [bill](#) to guarantee nationwide access to IVF. Walz and his wife, Gwen, have said they underwent "fertility treatments" – specifically, [intrauterine insemination](#) rather than IVF – to have their first child.

As has been widely reported, this election's Republican Party [platform](#) earlier removed a longstanding call for a national abortion ban, but still endorses [fetal personhood](#), a concept that legal scholars have [argued](#) could obviate or outlaw IVF. Meanwhile, the Republican presidential nominee, former President Donald Trump, who has said he has "no regrets" about appointing Supreme Court justices who voted to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, has also said that he, "generally speaking," would [not enforce](#) the 1873 [Comstock Act](#) to bar distribution of medication abortion by mail.



In Case You Missed It

- The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) rule that would have banned **noncompete employment agreements** was [struck down](#) this week by a Texas federal judge before it could take effect on Sept. 4. The decision means that, for now, employers do not need to comply with the rule, legal analysts [said](#), pending an appeal by the FTC of the court's decision.
- Amid an ongoing summer surge in cases, the Food and Drug Administration [approved](#) the new **COVID vaccine** from Pfizer and Moderna. The updated vaccine is designed to target the KP.2 strain, a descendant of the highly contagious JN.1 variant.
- *The Washington Post* published a [letter to the editor](#) from **Better Medicare Alliance** President and CEO Mary Beth Donahue that warned that "squeezing" funding for Medicare Advantage risks higher premiums, fewer benefits, and fewer plan choices.
- The health insurance trade group **AHIP** [announced](#) that it would launch a multi-million-dollar digital advertising and social media campaign next month to rally support for Medicare Advantage plans.



APG Announcements And Offerings

- [REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!](#) - **APG's Annual Fall Conference 2024 will be held November 11 – 13 in Washington, DC.** This year's theme is ***Health Care Strong: Embracing Change and Thriving in Uncertain Times***. Register now for Super Early Bird savings!
- The next APG Hosted Webinar, "**Intersecting Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDI) and Technology to Positively Impact Risk Adjustment and Patient Outcomes**" will take place on **Thursday, October 3, 2:00-3:00 pm ET**. The webinar will be presented by Episource. For more information, including the learning objectives and speakers, [click here](#). Please register [here](#).
- Want to get more involved in APG's Federal advocacy efforts? [Join APG Advocates today](#).
- **To our subscribers:** *Washington Update* will not publish next week due to the Labor Day holiday. It will return on September 6.

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