MRF Melanoma Research Foundation



The Advocate Newsletter – November 2025

Chair's Welcome

From the desk of Douglas Brodman, Board Chair:

The past few months have shown the incredible resilience of the melanoma community and our collective ability to bring about meaningful change. Your advocacy has helped ensure that Americans will have more choices and ability to find a sunscreen that works for them and directly prevent skin cancer in the process through the passing of the Supporting Accessible, Flexible and Effective (SAFE) Sunscreen Standards Act.

And yet, there is more work to be done. Registration is now open for our 2026 Advocacy Days event in March and I sincerely hope that you will plan to join us in Washington, DC to make your voice heard. Data and statistics don't change hearts and minds. Your story does.

Sincerely,

Douglas Brodman

Chair, Board of Directors

Advocacy Days Registration Now Open



Registration for Advocacy Days in Washington, DC is now open!

Join melanoma patients, caregivers, supporters, researchers and advocates from across the country on March 1-3, 2026. Learn about issues facing the melanoma community, our

community's key legislative priorities and share your story with lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

Register Now

Congress Passes Sunscreen Approval Reform Bill



Kim Wezik, MRF's Director of Public Policy and Advocacy, testifying before Congress in April during the Over-the-Counter Monograph User Fee Act (OMUFA) hearing

As part of the House's vote to end the government shutdown on November 12, the Over-the-Counter Monograph User Fee Act (OMUFA), including important provisions related to new sunscreen filter approvals, also passed. In the legislation, Congress has directed the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to consider real world evidence when appropriate for assessing sunscreen filter safety, create pathways to move away from animal testing and reiterate the important role of broad-spectrum sunscreens in skin cancer prevention. The bill was signed by President Trump on November 12.

The MRF has been active in working to advance this issue with federal lawmakers having made comments at FDA hearings on OMUFA reauthorization and testifying before Congress last April. We applaud lawmakers for working across the aisle to increase access to sunscreens and thank our advocates for joining us in this effort.

View the Approved Legislation Here

Government Shutdown Update



After 43 days, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) (HR 5371) to end the longest government shutdown in the country's history. The CR extends last year's spending levels through January 30, 2026. During the shutdown, federally funded clinical trials at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) paused patient enrollment, and the agency halted most grant operations. Similarly, all Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) prevention activities, including the Skin Cancer Prevention Program, came to a stop.

Now that the government has reopened, federal agencies will resume operations and grapple with layoffs imposed during the shutdown. Despite this short-term CR, Congress must still work to pass a full-year funding package for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.

Telehealth Access Temporarily Restored Post-Shutdown

As part of Congress's recently passed CR to reopen the federal government, Medicare telehealth coverage that enables greater access for patients seeking healthcare services has been temporarily extended through January 30, 2026. These waivers lapsed on October 1, 2025, leaving the patient community with disrupted care and without access to services they critically need to live. While the CR temporarily restores the telehealth flexibilities under Medicare, Congress has failed to reach a permanent solution for millions of patients reliant on telehealth every day. The MRF continues to monitor legislative updates and remain at the helm to push Congress towards securing permanent coverage of Medicare telehealth waivers.

MRF Joins 450 Advocacy Organizations in Urging Congress to Permanently

Ensure Telehealth Access

On November 4, 450 advocacy organizations, including the MRF, signed onto a letter urging Congressional leaders to immediately act on a long-term telehealth fix in their next legislative package to ensure stability and provide clarity for patients, providers and the health care system as a whole. Since the pandemic, Congress has extended telehealth flexibilities to have a telehealth visit from your home, allow providers to use their home address when providing telehealth services and receive telehealth services whether or not you live in a rural community. Unfortunately, those flexibilities were thrown into disarray when Congress failed to pass a federal budget that led to the government shutdown.

Telehealth remains a vital tool for the melanoma community, particularly for rare melanoma patients who often live at a great distance from rare melanoma specialists. The MRF is committed to ensuring that telehealth services continue to be available and that elected officials codify the access to care that millions of Americans have enjoyed for years.



1420 K Street NW, 7th Floor Washington, DC 20005 | Tel: (202) 347-9675
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