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We're about much more than just lobbying

A look at all we do to protect your clients' rights and your practice

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When some trial lawyers hear the words American Association for Justice, they may think, "Oh, that's all about lobbying in Congress."

But AAJ is much, much more.

In addition to our education, practice resources, and publications, AAJ's advocacy-focused departments – Public Affairs, State Affairs, Legal Affairs, and Communications – strategically work together to ensure that your practices and your clients' rights are protected at the federal and state levels.

State Affairs

Our State Affairs department is a research powerhouse, able to provide information and strategy on the issues your state trial lawyer associations (TLAs) are facing in legislatures across the country. Through State Affairs, AAJ is the only national plaintiff-side organization that is tracking state legislation nationwide and coordinating responses with the TLAs. Last year, State Affairs handled 300 requests from 46 state associations and the District of Columbia.

We've been closely monitoring a very real, ongoing threat in Nevada with Uber's bid for a ballot initiative proposing to restrict legal fees. Uber has aggressively used state legislatures to limit consumer protections in other states as well, specifically pushing a vicarious liability immunity bill and trying to roll back uninsured/underinsured motorist requirements across the board. While AAJ State Affairs does not lobby in the states, it partners with TLAs to help them prepare for their advocacy for their members' practices.

Public Affairs and Communications

AAJ's Public Affairs department advocates in Congress and federal agencies on issues that affect your practice, such as Medicare Secondary Payer and accessing your clients' medical records. Our work impacts you and your clients, whether you handle individual cases or have a mass tort practice.

AAJ monitors over 1,000 bills annually so that we are ready to fight any attempt to preempt state tort law. We currently support legislation to end forced arbitration, eliminate qualified immunity, stop corporations from misusing the bankruptcy code to evade accountability, raise the federal trucking insurance minimum, repeal blanket immunity for artificial intelligence, and ensure that families can hold Big Tech accountable if their children are harmed or killed as a result of dangerous, addictive, and exploitative online content.

Our communications department supports AAJ members and their clients by highlighting plaintiff issues for the national media. If you follow AAJ on social media, you will see our issues and members in the news. More information about our federal advocacy is available on our advocacy homepage.

Legal Affairs

AAJ's Legal Affairs department includes an Amicus Curiae program and Federal Rules program.

Amicus Curiae Update

AAJ's amicus curiae briefs help ensure that access to justice is rigorously defended in federal and state courts. Throughout the last year, AAJ filed dozens of briefs in support of the right to trial by jury, often in collaboration with state trial lawyer associations. Recently filed amicus briefs include:

- **Maryland Child Victims Act Cases** (Md.) – On August 6, AAJ, Child USA, Change the Conversation, Maryland Association for Justice, and Public Justice filed joint briefs in three cases brought under the 2023 Maryland Child Victims Act ("CVA"). The joint briefs urge the state supreme court to uphold the constitutionality of the act, which permits claims arising from child sexual abuse to be filed at any time during the victim's life.
- ***Schneider Electric USA v. Williams*** (Ky.) – On August 1, AAJ filed an amicus brief urging the Kentucky Supreme Court to uphold its longstanding rule that an employer owes a duty of care to protect their workers' household members from take-home asbestos and affirm lower court rulings in favor of a mesothelioma patient who was exposed to asbestos on her father's work clothes for over a decade.
- **In Re: Acetaminophen – ASD-ADHD Products Liability Litigation** (2d Cir.) — On July 24, AAJ filed an amicus brief urging the Second Circuit to reverse a district court's exclusion of expert testimony on general causation, and advocating for the plaintiffs' Seventh Amendment right to have a jury assess the weight and credibility of their experts' conclusions.

For more information or to request AAJ amicus support, please email legalaffairs@justice.org.

Federal Rules Update

AAJ closely monitors proposed amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure, Federal Rules of Evidence, and other rules governing court procedure and the impact the proposals have on trial lawyers and their clients. When changes are advanced by defense interests, AAJ ensures that plaintiff lawyers are represented by advocating for rules that are fair and balanced.

The Advisory Committee on Civil Rules is in the early stages of evaluating a plaintiff-side suggestion to increase the availability of remote live testimony at trials. AAJ is assembling a working group to provide helpful information to the Remote Testimony Subcommittee as they evaluate the proposed rule changes. If you are interested in joining the working group, please email Sue Steinman at susan.steinman@justice.org.

Working together

A silo does not generate success. We work in conjunction with the state and local trial lawyer associations across the country so that all plaintiff trial lawyers can win justice for their clients. It is critical for AAJ and the TLAs to share and build upon our successes and increase our support for your practices through vigilance in protecting the right to trial by jury.

I appreciate the opportunity to keep you informed about AAJ and welcome your input at advocacy@justice.org.


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