Committee Charges for 2012:

The Government Relations Committee is charged with reviewing federal regulations and congressional legislation that could possibly affect the nuclear medicine community as such policy issues arise. To that end, we deal with the following federal agencies:

- Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Department of Energy (DOE)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

To accomplish our goals, we lobby directly with contractors. Additionally, we have established good communication and working alliances with industry partners and professional organizations associated with nuclear medicine. This includes, but is not limited to CORAR, ACR, AMI, ASNC, and NEI.

Current Working Objectives/Goals:

- Provide the lead on legislative and regulatory issues where appropriate.
- Work with Coding & Reimbursement Committee leaders to appropriately address policy/GR needs in the area of CMS and related Medicare legislation.
- Support the CARE legislative efforts by and for the SNMMITS.
- Continue to work toward cooperative working partnerships with the NRC, FDA, and other regulatory agencies. Monitor and appropriately respond to the emerging and continuing issues at NRC and FDA. Assist the Center for Molecular Imaging Innovation and Translation (CMIIT) in advocating for change in the FDA imaging agents’ review/approval processes.
- Work with the Commission on Radiopharmaceuticals on government relations issues surrounding isotope production, domestic supply of Mo-99, etc.
- Continue to support basic and translational research at DOE Office of Science. Advocate in Congress for FY 2012 appropriations for DOE nuclear medicine research. Continue to advocate for the initiatives in the NAS "Advancing Nuclear Medicine Through Innovation" study.
- Work together with the SNMMITS Advocacy Committee and other relevant committees to enhance the grassroots advocacy programs and initiatives of SNMMI.
- Continue to monitor the ACO proposed rule.
- Coordinate HPRA activity with other societies to ensure a consistent message such as ACR, ASTRO, ASNC and the Academy of Radiology Research.
Progress of Charge/Objectives/Goals to Date:

REIMBURSEMENT

- The SNMMI continues to work with CMS on issues of coverage and payment for nuclear medicine procedures.
- Working with other imaging societies to reverse proposed reimbursement cuts in cardiac imaging and nuclear medicine procedures in general.

LEGISLATIVE

- H.R. 2104, the CARE bill, which would require those who perform medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures to meet minimum education and credentialing standards in order to receive Medicare reimbursement, was introduced on June 2, 2011 by Congressmen Ed Whitfield (KY-1). As of August 24, 2012 there are 130 cosponsors to the bill. On June 25, 2012, Senator Mike Enzi (E-WY) introduced the S. 3888, the Senate version of the CARE bill. As of August 24, 2012, S. 3888 has three cosponsors. We continue to work with the SNMMITM Advocacy Committee on passage of these bills.
- The "American Medical Isotopes Production Act of 2011" (S.99) was introduced by Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) on January 25, 2011. The bill will help patients who rely on medical imaging for the treatment and diagnosis of many common cancers by authorizing funding and providing a clear road map to create a domestic supply of Mo-99 while also allowing a responsible timeline and safeguards for the transfer of HEU to LEU. The bill was passed out of the Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent on November 17, 2011. On December 2, 2011 it was referred to the House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment.

REGULATORY

- Continued dialogue with the FDA regarding various regulatory issues.
- Continued work with NRC to mitigate any regulatory changes that affect nuclear medicine, including developing comments on the proposed changes to Part 35 and monitoring NRC activities related to regulations for patient release after treatment with I-131.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Continue to work with the SNMMI Isotope Availability Task Group to address domestic isotope supply issues in the wake of the Mo-99 and other fission product supply crisis. Also now working on avenues to increase TI-201 production that has been unable to meet demand when Tc-99m is in short supply.