



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

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May 2, 2025

Subject: Securing AAOS' Future Through Stronger Governance and Clear Values

Dear Fellows,

Recent social media posts and public commentary have raised questions about AAOS' governance, our nomination process, and the proposed changes to our bylaws. While I usually avoid responding to individual criticisms, this moment calls for clarity — and for you to hear directly from your AAOS leadership.

AAOS is strong — and we're committed to a future shaped by active surgeons and better patient care. Our mission has always been bigger than any one issue: to support you as orthopaedic surgeons and to advance the care of the patients we serve. But doing that well requires strong, modern governance.

Why These Changes? Why Now?

Building a better future for orthopaedics requires a strong, resilient foundation.

These changes aren't just procedural. They're designed to make AAOS more nimble, member-focused, and better able to represent your real-world challenges — whether in clinical innovation, advocacy, or education. This is about ensuring that your voice and priorities as a practicing surgeon stay at the heart of AAOS.

They are designed to:

- Streamline and modernize governance — reducing our bylaws from 60+ pages to fewer than 20 for clarity and flexibility.
- Prioritize fiduciary responsibility — ensuring every director and key committee acts transparently and in the best interests of members and the AAOS.
- Strengthen representation — emphasizing active, practicing surgeons in leadership, while preserving meaningful engagement for all members.
- Support innovation and advocacy — allowing AAOS to adapt to evolving clinical practice, education models, technology, and patient needs.

If we don't modernize, we risk stagnation — and with that, the erosion of our influence, our innovation, and ultimately, our ability to deliver better care.



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This isn't just a governance update. It's a recommitment to excellence, relevance, and patient outcomes.

Clarifying Recent Events

You may also be aware of a recent lawsuit brought against AAOS by an AAOS Fellow, who was not selected by the Nominating Committee, to appear on the ballot for Second Vice President. This lawsuit named not only the Academy and Association, but also each individual Board member, the Nominating Committee Chair, and our CEO.

AAOS did not initiate this litigation.

The court reviewed the facts and upheld AAOS's interpretation of the bylaws and specifically finding, among other things, that the Fellow was unable to show he had "an ascertainable right to serve as a candidate for Second Vice President." Please see my [post](#) with more details about the lawsuit and access the full appellate decision. I encourage any interested member to read it directly.

This litigation resulted in a significant and unplanned expense — over \$500,000 in legal fees — paid from your membership dues.

We share this because we believe that transparency — even when difficult — is essential to earning and keeping your trust.

Looking Ahead

We know members have different perspectives, and we welcome them. Disagreement does not weaken us. But disinformation can. That's why I wanted you to have the facts — and to understand not just what we're doing, but why it matters.

AAOS is evolving — deliberately, transparently, and with the goal of serving you and your patients even more effectively.

Thank you for your continued trust, dedication, and service to the orthopaedic community.

With respect and appreciation,

Ned Amendola, MD, FAAOS
AAOS President