



2024 Policy Priorities

In 2024, PIA will continue its advocacy on behalf of independent insurance agents. While we have identified the issues below as our top priorities for the coming year, PIA always works to promote the interests of our independent agent members, wherever those interests take us.

Crop Insurance: PIA supports the federal crop insurance program, a highly technical program which relies on the expertise of independent insurance agents. The program requires private-sector insurance carriers to offer crop insurance to eligible growers who are interested in purchasing it.

The process of reauthorizing the Farm Bill, which includes the federal crop insurance program, is ongoing. PIA will continue to help policymakers understand the critical role PIA's independent agent members play in providing crop insurance as the Farm Bill reauthorization process moves forward.

In addition, PIA continues to support provisions included in the year-end fiscal 2024 appropriations package; these proposals were meant to address the inflation adjustment issues that have been effectively reducing crop insurance agent compensation for the past several years. These provisions made explicit Congress's view that the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) has the legal authority to provide crop insurance agents with administrative and operating (A&O) inflation adjustment relief. PIA will continue to urge the USDA to restore the inflation adjustment and will continue to pressure Congress to address the inflation issue in the Farm Bill reauthorization process if the USDA does not independently reinstate the inflation adjustment.

PIA will continue to monitor the budget and appropriations process to ensure the crop insurance program is not subjected to budget cuts.

For more details on PIA's advocacy in the area of crop insurance, please visit the [Crop Insurance section of the PIA Policy Priorities webpage](#).

Flood Insurance: PIA continues to support the long-term reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). In 2019, PIA [endorsed](#) a legislative package that unanimously passed the House Financial Services Committee but stalled afterward and was never considered by the full House or Senate.

This year, PIA is urging Congress to pass a long-term reauthorization with needed reforms. The NFIP has been extended over 25 times on a short-term basis since 2017, and more short-term

extensions will likely be needed throughout 2024. PIA will continue to request that Congress reauthorize the NFIP long-term to minimize the likelihood of future lapses and provide policyholders and industry participants with the certainty they need. We will also advocate for a long-term reauthorization to include key reforms and to recognize the essential role independent agents play in educating consumers and serving as frontline experts on the program.

PIA will continue to monitor the budget and appropriations process to ensure the NFIP is not subjected to budget cuts.

For more details on PIA's advocacy in the area of flood insurance, please visit the [Flood Insurance section of the PIA Policy Priorities](#) webpage.

Cannabis Safe Harbor: PIA strongly supports legislation to protect insurance agents and carriers from federal criminal liability for engaging in the business of insurance with cannabis-related entities in states where cannabis is legal.

PIA's position respects state insurance laws and the primacy of the state insurance regulatory system. We seek to protect independent agents from criminal liability for engaging in business activities that are legal pursuant to state law. This issue is broadly bipartisan; cannabis safe harbor legislation has passed the House a total of 7 times, 4 of which occurred during the last Congress. Unfortunately, each time, the legislation stalled in the Senate.

In 2023, the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee passed the Secure and Fair Enforcement Regulation (SAFER) Banking Act, a [cannabis safe harbor bill](#) (S. 2860) introduced by Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR). PIA will continue to advocate for its passage during the remainder of this Congress.

For more details on PIA's advocacy in the area of cannabis financial services, please visit the [Cannabis Safe Harbor section of the PIA Policy Priorities](#) webpage.

Tax Issues: PIA supports the [Main Street Tax Certainty Act](#) (H.R. 4721/S. 1706), introduced by Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) and Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R-PA). The Main Street Tax Certainty Act would make permanent the 20 percent tax deduction available to some S corporations, also known as passthrough corporations.

Following the passage of the 2017 tax reform law, which made available a deduction of up to 20 percent for "agents," PIA successfully [advocated](#) for insurance agents to be included among those eligible for the deduction. Since then, eligible independent agencies have used this deduction to strengthen their businesses and provide for their families. The deduction was an enormously valuable benefit during the unprecedented economic downturn brought on by the pandemic.

Unfortunately, unlike the permanent tax cuts provided to C corporations by the 2017 law, the passthrough deduction as passed is temporary and will expire on December 31, 2025, unless Congress extends it. PIA will continue to urge Congress to provide eligible independent agencies with much-needed financial certainty and stability by making this tax benefit permanent.

For more details on PIA’s advocacy on tax issues, please visit the [Tax section of the PIA Policy Priorities](#) webpage.

Repeal or Reform of the Federal Insurance Office (FIO): PIA supports legislation to repeal or reform the Federal Insurance Office, a federal body overseen by the Treasury Department. Congress created the FIO in the 2010 Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, and it is an ongoing threat to the successful state insurance regulatory system.

The mandate of the FIO was substantially expanded by the Biden administration’s 2021 [Executive Order \(EO\) on Climate-Related Financial Risk](#), which directed the Treasury Secretary to task the FIO with assessing “climate-related issues or gaps in the supervision and regulation of insurers.” In 2022, the Treasury Secretary issued a notice and request for comment on a proposed “[climate-related financial risk data collection](#).” PIA registered [its objections](#) to this proposal, noting its potential to unnecessarily duplicate state-based regulatory data collection and the burdensome nature of its unusual granularity.

Most recently, the FIO issued a revised version of its data collection proposal for public review and comment; the revised proposal also sought the approval of the Office of Management and Budget for the FIO to implement its proposed data collection. PIA [reiterated](#) its longstanding objections to the plan on the basis that it will impose an undue burden on small and regional insurers, it is poorly designed for nationwide analysis, and it is duplicative of existing efforts by state regulators to collect similar but more useable data.

To prevent the continued expansion of the FIO’s authority, and to prevent its further intrusion on states’ power to regulate the business of insurance, PIA supports the FIO Elimination Act (H.R. 2933/S. 1694), which was introduced by Rep. Ben Cline (R-VA) and Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX).

In addition, PIA strongly supports efforts to reform the office by significantly narrowing the scope of its power. Rep. Scott Fitzgerald (R-WI) and Senator Katie Britt (R-AL) recently introduced the Insurance Data Protection Act (H.R. 5535/S. 3349) with PIA’s [strong support](#). This legislation will meaningfully reform the FIO by removing the FIO Director’s subpoena power.

For more details on PIA’s efforts to repeal or reform the FIO, please visit the [FIO section of the PIA Policy Priorities](#) webpage.