

This month the association saw its biggest surge of members in new states since AID began, with the addition of seven states: Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and Utah, she said.

In the past 10 years, hospitals have been aggressively buying up independent doctors and turning them into employed physicians. In 2000, 57 percent of the nation's doctors were independent; today only one in three are, or 33 percent, according to the Accenture.

"That trend is not good for patients, doctors or communities," said AID co-founder Tom Thomas, CPA. "We founded the Association of Independent Doctors because we recognized that as the number of independent doctors shrinks, unfavorable market dynamics, including higher health-care costs and less competition, grow."

In the past three years, the association has landed a role on the national stage providing a collective voice for independent doctors who, before AID was formed, had little to no voice.

AID representatives have spoken on Capitol Hill in Washington four times, addressed national health-care associations, partnered with the Federal Trade Commission to fight hospital consolidations, and has been a resource to many media outlets.

Meanwhile, the association's goals – to stop the trend of hospitals buying up medical practices, to educate consumers about how this consolidation increases costs and lowers quality and access, to increase price transparency so consumers can know what health-care costs before they get their bills, to expose and stop nonprofit hospitals' abuse of their tax-exempt status, and to inform lawmakers about why independent doctors are critical to America's health – have not wavered.

Marking another milestone, the association is hosting its first conference for independent doctors, Independence in Action 2016, on Nov. 5, in Orlando.

For more information about the conference or AID go to www.aid-us.org



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