



TO: Georgia Association of Community Service Boards
FROM: Brock Clay GPA
DATE: February 12, 2012
SUBJECT: Weekly Legislative Report

CALENDAR

The General Assembly was in session this week for four days from February 6-9, for legislative days 15-18.

Adjourned Friday, February 10 – Tuesday, February 14, the General Assembly will return Wednesday, February 15 – Friday, February 17 for legislative days 19-21.

House Appropriations Human Resources Subcommittee Meeting

Friday, February 17, 2012

1:00pm-3:00pm

Presentation from DBHDD on FY 13 Budget

BUDGET HEARINGS

The House Appropriations Health Subcommittee held two hearings this week to hear testimony from state agencies, including the Dept. of Community Health, the Dept. of Public Health and the Georgia Trauma Care Network Commission. There were minimal questions from committee members to DCH Commissioner David Cook and DPH Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald.

LEGISLATION SIGNED INTO LAW

[HB 683](#) relates to garnishment proceedings and states that the execution and filing of a garnishee's answer does not constitute the practice of law and does not require an attorney.

HB 683 took effect upon the governor's signature last week.

DD WAIVER RATES

The DCH Board did not take action on the proposed DD waiver rates. However, DCH Commissioner David Cook and DCH Board Chairman Ross Mason both made comments on the public hearing on the amount of comment presented and asking the public to continue providing comment as the comment period will be kept open.

Commissioner Cook said that more work would have to be done before the rates would be implemented and that further study would be conducted over the next several months. However,

the commissioner did not provide any comments on a specific time table.

MEDICAID REDESIGN

DCH Deputy Commissioner Blake Fulenwider gave a presentation and update to the DCH Board at their monthly meeting on February 9.

At the following link you can see the presentation, particularly slides 9 and 10 that provide ratings of the different options in the report.

http://dch.georgia.gov/vgn/images/portal/cit_1210/36/9/181312584Medicaid_Redesign_Briefing_Slides-Final.pdf

This upcoming week, there will be two task forces organized by DCH that meet to discuss the Navigant Medicaid Redesign report.

The first is a providers task force that will meet on Wednesday, February 15, and the second is an Aged, Blind, Disabled task force that will meet on Thursday, February 16.

DRUG TESTING FOR TANF & MEDICAID RECIPIENTS

[SB 292](#) requires TANF and Medicaid recipients to submit to drug testing for program eligibility.

SB 292 was heard in subcommittee, but no action was taken on the bill. The bill author, Senator John Albers (R-Roswell), stated he would be making revisions to the legislation and will bring it back to the subcommittee.

MENTAL HEALTH TRANSPORT LEGISLATION

HB 231, legislation to address issues with the transporting of mental health patients, has undergone a series of reviews by a working group.

The latest version of the legislation removes any mention of or requirement of medical transport and requires the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities be responsible for subsequent transports (which the department has agreed to), and law enforcement will be responsible for initial transports.

Further revisions have been made to the legislation, and it is about to be put into a formal substitute for consideration.

Dr. Derril Gay has recommended that GACSB support the legislation if it stays in its current form.

OTHER LEGISLATION

[HB 831](#) would move the Division of Rehabilitation Services from the Department of Labor to the Department of Human Services. Labor Commissioner Mark Butler has opposed the legislation, but it is a part of Governor Deal's effort at reforming state agencies.

HB 831 *was passed by the House Human Relations & Aging Committee.*

SB 361 deletes references in state code to the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Hospitals and replaces those references with “nationally recognized health care accreditation body.”

SB 361 *was passed by the Senate Health & Human Services Committee.*