



Legislative Session Update

March 15, 2019

Legislative Day 32

Legislation Awaiting the Governor's Signature Into Law

Interstate Medical Licensure Compact

SB 16, by Sen. Kay Kirkpatrick, M.D., will improve the process for physicians to obtain licenses in other participating states. Georgia will be the 25th state to become a part of the compact if signed into law by the Governor. This bill passed the Senate unanimously and passed the House with only one dissenting vote.

Mammograms

HB 62 by Rep. Sharon Cooper, would require a health care facility to notify a patient whenever dense breast tissue is detected in a mammogram. The legislation includes specific language that must be included in that notification.

Legislation On The Move

Step Therapy

HB 63 by Rep. Sharon Cooper, would establish exceptions to health insurer step therapy protocols. The bill passed the Senate Insurance committee on Thursday; it now is in Senate Rules waiting to go the full Senate for a vote.

Needle Exchange

HB 217 by Rep. Sharon Cooper, creates a syringe services program relating to hypodermic syringes or needles. We expect a hearing in the Senate Health committee next week.

Pre-exposure (PrEP) to HIV Pilot Program

HB 290 by Rep. Sharon Cooper, establishes a three-year pilot program to provide pre-exposure prophylaxis drug assistance or services to persons at risk of being infected with HIV. The bill awaits a hearing in the Senate Health committee.

Hospice Orders

HB 374, by Rep. John LaHood, authorizes certified medication aides to administer medications to residents under hospice care pursuant to a physician's written orders. The bill was reported favorably by the Senate Health Committee and is expected on the Senate floor next week.

Abortion - Heartbeat

HB 481, by Rep. Ed Setzler, institutes a law declaring that abortions are illegal in the state after a fetal heartbeat is detected, which is usually around six weeks gestation. After much controversy surrounding this sensitive issue, the bill passed the House in the late hours of legislative day 28, by a vote of 93 - 74. Yesterday, the bill was heard in the Senate Science and Technology committee where it underwent over four hours of discussion and testimony. A committee vote is expected early next week.

Dangerous Drug Update

HB 483, by Rep. Ron Stephens, is the annual update to Schedules I, IV, and V controlled substances. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Health committee.

Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission

HB 514, by Rep. Kevin Tanner, creates the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission. The legislation creates a commission comprised of 23 experts to develop a statewide plan for mental and behavioral health. The current version presented by Rep. Tanner now removes the two CSB slots that were added in by Chairman Cooper and voted on by the House Health Committee just one week ago. Sen. Nan Orrock moved to amend the bill by adding CSBs back in the bill with one non-voting slot.

Out of Network Billing

SB 56 by Sen. Chuck Hufstetler, was assigned to the House Insurance Sub-Committee where it had hearing earlier this week. No vote was taken.

As a reminder, the bill:

- Removes the patient from the billing dispute that occurs between physicians, providers, health insurers and hospitals;
- Applies to emergency and elective cases;
- Provides a minimum benefit standard paid to physicians and providers for the health insurers that lack networks;

PDMP Revision

SB 121, by Sen. Larry Walker, requires the length of time data is kept on the PDMP. The language allowing law enforcement to search without cause has been removed. The bill was assigned to the House Judiciary Non-Civil committee and reported favorably. We expect this legislation to be on the House floor in the coming week.

Creation of Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform

SB 222, by Sen. Jesse Stone, reauthorizes the Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform, more than eight months after the previous council lapsed. The council would proceed through 2022. It has been assigned to the House Judiciary Non-Civil committee.

Legislation Awaiting Committee Action

HIV Medicaid and ADAP Recipients

HB 158 introduced by Rep. Deborah Silcox, makes it easier for HIV-positive Medicaid recipients to receive the most effective medications, allowing physicians to get patients into treatments quickly with the most effective drug regimen available. The bill is sitting in the Senate Health committee.

State Health Benefit Plan Bariatric Surgery Pilot Renewal & Expansion

HB 160, by Rep. Katie Dempsey, renews and expands the pilot for a bariatric surgery benefit to a four year pilot allowing for 250 plan participants per year through 2024. The bill is sitting in the Senate Health committee.

Pharmacy Anti Steering

HB 233, by Rep. David Knight, enables a transparency program for Pharmacy Benefit Managers. The bill is sitting in the Senate Health committee.

Hospital Bed Tax

HB 321, by Rep. Jodi Lott, extends the sunset provision of the hospital Medicaid financing program through June 2025. The bill currently sits in Senate Finance.

Pharmacy Benefit Manager Reform

HB 323, by Rep. David Knight, would provide transparency of PBMs to report annually to the Commissioner the aggregate amount of all rebates that the pharmacy benefits manager received from pharmaceutical manufacturers and the aggregate amount of rebates the pharmacy benefits manager received from pharmaceutical manufacturers that it did not pass through to insurers or payers. The bill was assigned to Senate Health committee where it awaits further action.

Medicaid Waivers

SB 106 by Sen. Blake Tillery, awaits a hearing in the House Special Committee on Access to Quality Health Care. We expect the House committee to take the bill up next week.

Insurance Card Disclosure

SB 142, by Sen. Larry Walker, requires that a statement indicating that the subscriber's health policy is fully insured must be included on a subscriber's health insurance identification card. The bill is in the House Insurance committee

Budget Update

On Tuesday this past week, Governor Kemp signed the Amended Fiscal Year 2019 Budget at North Atlanta High School.

In attendance, was Governor Brian Kemp, Lt. Governor Geoff Duncan, House Speaker David Ralston, Atlanta Public Schools System Superintendent Meria Carstarphen, and North Atlanta High School Principal Curtis Douglass

The 2020 Fiscal Year Budget is expected to be adopted by the Senate in the coming week.

For our complete legislative tracking sheet [click here.](#)

Legislative Calendar

Legislators will be in session Monday, Thursday, and Friday next week, taking the session through legislative day 35.

As a reminder, Sine Die (Legislative Day 40) is set for Tuesday, April 2 where legislators will work into the late hours of the evening looking to finalize any outstanding legislation before heading back to their districts.

Find My Legislator

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