

Idaho Academy of Family Physicians

2018 Legislative Report

Week 7 February 19 – February 23

We are getting to the point in the legislative session in which few new bills are introduced, and committees focus their work on bills from the other body. The House and Senate spend more time on the floor working through agendas, focusing on debating and moving bills to the other body. As a result, House bills fall to the bottom of the Senate floor calendar and likewise the House deals with House bills and puts Senate bills at the bottom of their calendar. The effect is that bills from the other body will experience delays in being debated and voted upon.

Additionally, the Senate Local Government and Taxation Committee narrowly passed to the Senate floor the \$200 million tax cut bill previously passed by the House. Arguments over tax cuts were expected to be the most challenging matter this year. The fact that the Senate Committee passed the tax cut bill could significantly shorten the legislative session.

New Legislation:

HB 494: Immunization Notices – Signatures Required

This bill passed the House Health & Welfare Committee and is awaiting a vote in the full House. This legislation is written so that for every immunization given, the provider and the patient or guardian must sign an acknowledgment of receipt of the required immunization notices. **This bill would add additional administrative burdens on physician office staff.**

HB 505: Physical Therapist Dry Needling

This bill passed the House on a 63-4 vote and is awaiting a hearing in the Senate Health & Welfare Committee. The bill allows physical therapists to use a technique called “dry needling” that is similar to acupuncture in that it uses thin filiform needles to stimulate neural, muscular and connective tissues under the skin.

HB 563: Plan First Idaho

This bill is scheduled to be heard in the House Health and Welfare Committee on Wednesday. This purpose of this bill is to provide family planning services and supplies to Idaho Women ages 19-44 with a family income at or below 133% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and are otherwise ineligible for Medicare, Medicaid, or health insurance that covers family planning services. Currently these women are only eligible to enroll in Medicaid if they become pregnant and lose coverage within 60 days of delivery. This results in high costs to the State due to the short-term coverage for these women and often long-term coverage for their children. The goal is to improve access to family planning services to prevent unintended pregnancies and provide preconception planning to improve maternal and birth outcomes. This legislation is a Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver that includes a five-year demonstration period, enabling time-certain evaluation of the waiver's effectiveness.

HB 625: Tax on Opioids

This bill was introduced and will be assigned to a committee for hearing. This bill is designed to fund and provide services to prevent and treat opioid addiction in Idaho.

[HB 571: Abortion Complications Reporting Act](#)

This bill provides for significant increases in reporting requirements for abortion complications. **This bill is being replaced by a new bill.** We will provide more information next week.

UPDATES on previous legislation:

[HB 464: Dual Waiver "Idaho Health Care Plan" House floor vote postponed until February 27.](#)

UPDATE: *The House postponed the floor vote on this measure for a two-week period. It had previously passed committee on a vote of 7-5. There are two possible reasons for this delay: one is there may not be enough yes votes for passage; the second is that it would cost money out of the general fund and they need to let JFAC do some work to determine the cost issue (especially in light of a parallel discussion of granting some form of tax relief to the citizens). it's prospects of passing the House are anyone's guess.*

[HB 472: Rural Physician Incentive Program \(RPIP\) matching funds](#)

UPDATE: *This bill passed the House 41-28 this week and now awaits action in the Senate Health and Welfare Committee.*

The bill would allow for the state to provide a financial match to the RPIP program in the amount of \$640,000, subject to an appropriation by the Joint Finance and Appropriation Committee.

[HB 465: Medicaid Dental Care](#)

UPDATE: *This bill passed the full House on Monday on a narrow 36-32 vote, and now awaits action by the Senate Health and Welfare Committee.*

This bill would restore preventative dental care services for a certain population of Medicaid recipients. This program was cut during the recessionary years and her goal is to reinstate it. The expected cost for the program is \$1.2 million.

[SB 1311: Direct Primary Care Pilot Program](#)

UPDATE: *This bill passed the Senate unanimously on Thursday this week.*

Senator Steven Thayne's proposal would allow three of Idaho's Health Districts to participate in a pilot program that provides Primary Care services to individuals for a period of ten months IF they also participate in financial literacy classes/programs.

[HB 513: Sales and Use Tax Exemption for free clinics](#)

UPDATE: *This bill passed the Senate Local Government and Tax committee on Thursday, now goes to the Senate floor for action.*

The bill would provide tax exemption of sales tax for clinics that are members of the Idaho Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, of which there are ten members, and whose average sales tax obligation over the last three years is \$10,000.

[HB 353: Immunity for Physician Volunteers](#)

UPDATE: *This bill passed the Senate Health and Welfare Committee on Wednesday and is awaiting action by the full Senate. It has already passed the House.*

This bill will provide additional immunity for physicians and other healthcare providers who volunteer at community screening events.

[HB 451: Medical Residency Charitable Tax deduction](#)

This bill passed the senate 28-6. It has already passed the House and now goes to the Governor.

The bill would provide an income tax credit for charitable contributions made to accredited Idaho-based medical residency programs.

Graduate Medical Education Ten-Year Plan:

Update: This item is scheduled to be addressed by the JFAC Committee the first week of March. There remains plenty of behind the scenes work with JFAC members to fund the first year of the plan.

Bills that have reached final disposition:

[SB 1255: Tobacco Age of Possession Killed in Senate State Affairs Committee](#)

UPDATE: After a few hours of debate the Senate State Affairs Committee voted 6-3 to Hold this bill in committee. The basic arguments against it ran along the lines of "if we can ask our 18-year-olds to go to war, should we limit their ability to purchase certain products?"

This bill would change the age of purchase for tobacco products and electronic cigarettes from 18 – 21 years of age.

[HB 495: Health Care Billing Equity Act HELD in House H & W Committee](#)

UPDATE: This bill was held in Committee after much debate and opposition from health care groups. It is expected that the stakeholders shall get together over the interim to come with a solution.

This bill places strict controls on billing for patients who seek care for certain out of network services.

Bills signed into Law

Unemployment Insurance Tax reduction

UPDATE: Governor Otter signed this bill into law on January 31.

Anyone who pays unemployment insurance taxes will see a reduction in that tax beginning January 1, 2018. It is estimated to reduce employer's unemployment taxes approximately 30% over a three-year period beginning in 2018.

If at any point you would like to have more detail on any of these items, beyond these short descriptions, we would be happy to provide those for you.

We will continue to track issues that directly affect IAFP.

Ken Burgess
Veritas Advisors, LLP