



Legislative Contact Information

Get the latest Legislative updates on the WMS website:

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To review complete text of bills, visit the Wyoming Legislative Website:

legisweb.state.wy.us

Bill status information:

800-342-9570

To contact your legislator directly, call:

House: 777-7852
Senate: 777-7711

To leave a message of support or opposition for a specific bill, call:

777-VOTE
(777-8683)

WYOMING MEDICAL SOCIETY

Legislative Update ~ February 26, 2010

WEEK 3 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The 2010 Budget Session is winding down and with less than one full week remaining the pressure is on. WMS is pleased with the outcome of most measures this session, and will provide a detailed legislative wrap-up communication next week with the final 2010 legislative update.

Thank you to our WMS Doctors of the Day who volunteered their precious time to provide care in the Capitol Medical Aid Station. Your generous contribution does not go unnoticed and we greatly appreciate you.

MEDICAL REVIEW PANEL CLEARS FINAL HURDLE

Having passed third and final reading in the Senate, the final version of HB 26, Medical Review Panel, is headed to the Governor's office for signing. Although the "loser-pays" provision, initially proposed by Rep. Tim Hallinan, MD, did not survive the process, WMS is still pleased with the improvements that HB 26 brings to the Medical Review Panel. Physician advocates are eager to see if language attempting to ensure inadmissibility of panel proceedings, discoveries and decisions will increase utilization of the panel.

BILL TO PROMOTE PHYSICIAN DISCRETION GAINS SUPPORT

Late last week members of the Senate Labor, Health and Social Services Committee approved a measure to amend the Wyoming Cancer Control Act to authorize physicians to complete follow-up colorectal cancer screening tests if deemed medically necessary. Currently, the Cancer Control Act only authorizes one colorectal cancer screening in a ten year period. House Bill 11, Cancer Control Act, sponsored by Representative Ken Esquibel and Co-sponsored by Representatives Barbuto, Bonner, Byrd, Childers and Millin and Senators Landen, Martin and Meyer is strongly supported by the Wyoming Medical Society.

PHARMACEUTICAL REGULATION BILL DIES

SF 67, Pharmacy Benefits Management, died in the House Corporations Committee on Thursday of this week. The bill would have required pharmacy benefit managers to register and pay a license fee with the State of Wyoming, as well as disclose all financial terms and arrangements for remuneration that apply between the pharmacy benefits manager and any prescription drug manufacturer or labeler, including formulary management and drug substitution programs, educational support, claims processing and pharmacy network fees that are charged from retail pharmacies and data sales fees. The C-WISH proponents of this legislation, which include retired internist Eric Wedell, MD, of Cheyenne, felt the bill would provide greater transparency to providers and patients. Opponents of the bill,

including the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), felt the bill required disclosure of proprietary information.

LEGISLATURE ACTS TO PROTECT WYOMING YOUTH

House Bill 63, tanning salons-minors, sponsored by Representative Millin, prohibits allowing the use of ultraviolet tanning devices by minors under fourteen (14) years of age unless a parent or legal guardian is present. HB 63 was voted out of the Senate Labor, Health and Social Services Committee and cleared Committee of the Whole. WMS expressed support of this bill in Committee as a commendable effort by the legislature to protect young people in Wyoming who may not fully understand the damaging effects of tanning beds.

AN EFFORT TO REFORM INSURANCE MARKET CONSIDERED

A proposal by House Speaker (and likely gubernatorial candidate) Colin Simpson to allow health insurance sales across state lines advanced out of the Senate Labor Committee Friday. Members of the committee, along with Speaker Simpson, creatively re-drafted and altered portions of the bill to provide flexibility for further study. The bill is intended to increase competition and drive down the cost of health insurance for consumers, increasing access to care. The bill would create a multi-state consortium to eliminate duplicate regulations and decrease the administrative costs of care. Currently an interstate compact allows life insurance policies to be sold in 40 states. However, it is not clear if other state insurance commissioners would be interested joining a multi-state consortium or evaluating uniform health insurance regulations. The bill moves on to the Senate Floor Monday for the first of three readings before it could become law.

MIDWIFE LICENSURE BILL CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD

SF 48, Licensure of midwives, continues to progress through this year's legislative process. Individual WMS members continue to express concern and hesitation with regard to this bill even though the medical society has removed formal opposition of the measure. Before passing out of the House Labor, Health and Social Services Committee late Wednesday evening WMS Executive Director, Sheila Bush, testified that physicians maintain the safest environment for a mother to deliver a baby is in a healthcare facility under the supervision of a physician. However, given the will of the legislature to allow this alternative option for women in Wyoming, WMS did its best to work with proponents of the bill to ensure the safest midwife license act possible to protect Wyoming's patients.

ELDERLY CARE BILL NEARS FINISH LINE

HB 86, Medicaid - Elderly Care, continued its march into law as it passed its third and final reading on the Senate Floor this past Friday. The bill would allow Wyoming entities to implement localized "Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)". PACE is a capitated benefit that features a comprehensive service delivery system and integrated Medicare and Medicaid financing. For most participants, the comprehensive service package permits them to continue living at home, maintaining their self-dignity, while receiving needed services rather than being institutionalized, all at a cost savings to the State Medicaid Office. Representative Lori Millin and geriatrician Kristina Stefka, MD, both of Cheyenne, carried the bill through the Senate hurdles this week. The bill will make a pro forma stop in the House to be read across the desk, and then move onto the Governor's desk for consideration.

BUDGET BILL NEARLY COMPLETE

SF 1 and HB 1, the general appropriations bills for the operation of state government over the next two years, has now cleared the appropriations committee, the floor of each chamber, and moves on to conference to reconcile any differences between the bills after consideration on the floor. The bills are largely identical, though there are some discrepancies as to how much funding the State will provide to local governments, and whether the State will choose to dip into reserve savings accounts to fund any operations, or operate solely on anticipated revenues and maintain and add to savings accounts for a potentially prolonged economic downturn. In regards to health care and Medicaid funding, federal stimulus funds will largely cover any shortfalls as the Medicaid rolls grow with higher unemployment rates in Wyoming. The bill will likely emerge from conference for one final vote in each chamber mid-week, and then go on to the Governor for consideration.