



E-Alliance Extra

Missouri Alliance for Home Care

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MAHC Legislative Update

The legislature will begin their Spring Break next week. This is a great opportunity for members to invite legislators on a few home visits. We have made great strides in addressing the 21-27 point issue. Your advocacy has been invaluable.

What we need to do now is get them to better understand the devastating effect that reducing the CDS cost cap to 60% could have on some consumers. **Action Item - Take advantage of your legislators being in district next week and take them on a home visit to some of these individuals.**

Highlights from past 2 weeks of session:

House Budget Committee

- Yesterday, Chair Fitzpatrick released his budget recommendations which includes:
 - HCBS funding for 21 point count (Governor's recommendation was 27)
 - Provider rate cut of 1.5% (Governor's recommendation was 3%)
 - 60% cost cap in CDS program (same as Governor's recommendation)

Please note that the funding mentioned above is tied to HCB3

- Last week the Budget Committee voted due pass to file a budget committee bill (HCB3) that would remove the tax credit for low-income seniors and disabled residents who rent (also known as the circuit breaker). The bill calls for the creation of the Missouri Senior Services Protection Fund. Moneys in the fund shall be allocated for services for low-income seniors and people with disabilities.
 - The savings would result in approximately \$52-\$57 million dollars. Representative Fitzpatrick framed this as the "only option" to fund the program to bring the points back down to 21.
 - HCB 3 was referred to the Rules – Legislative Oversight Committee. A hearing was held and was passed out by a vote of 7-5.
- Yesterday, HCB3 was debated on the house floor.
 - Proponents argue that reducing this tax credit has been debated for many years. There have been 2 tax commissions over the past couple of years and

both recommended removing this tax credit. They argue that renters should not receive a property tax credit.

- Opponents argue that there should be other options to find funding instead of taking it away from seniors and disabled to fund services for seniors and disabled (robbing Peter to pay Paul). This should never have to be a choice.
- While the debate was lively at times, the bill was perfected by a vote of 89-69. It was placed on the calendar for third read.
- Today, the final debate took place. Proponents and Opponents voiced their opinions again. **Just minutes ago, by a vote of 85-72 HCB3 passed and will now move onto the Senate.**

Senate Bill 526

- Senator Brown has filed SB526. This bill modifies provisions related to the consumer-directed services program. The bill calls for:
 - Requires unscheduled and in-person monitoring of attendants
 - Requires vendors to notify consumers during orientation that falsification of attendant time sheets is considered fraud
 - Requires vendors to submit an annual cost report and authenticated documents including copies of leases, management reports, contracts with consultants and federal and state income tax returns
- A hearing was held this week in Senate Appropriations, which Senator Brown is the Chair. The bill passed out of committee by a 6-1 vote. Comments from the committee included:
 - Feel this is a necessary program but seems to loose
 - Too many incentives in this program
 - Too much fat in the system
- MAHC has expressed our concerns related to this bill including the fact that some of what this bill calls for is already in regulation. We discussed the issues related to Department of Labor requirements and third-party employer. We also spoke to them about the ideas developed by MAHC's CDS Task Force to help improve the program and improve quality. We are going to continue to meet with Senator Brown and others involved.

Senate Bill 28

- Due to combined advocacy efforts, last week SB28 stalled on the floor and has been placed on the informal calendar. Senator Sater was given a one-hour courtesy time frame to discuss this on the floor. Some Senators were prepared to filibuster.
- Senator Sater wants to continue the conversations related to block grants.
- This bill could still come up at any time, so it is important that we are still talking with legislators about the damaging consequences of block grants and per capita caps.

National Issues

American Health Care Act

- Last week the U.S. House of Representatives released their official Affordable Care Act (ACA) repeal and replace legislation, the American Health Care Act (AHCA). (*see MAHC's memo dated 3-9-17*)
- This morning the House Budget Committee approved the package over the objections of three GOP members.
- The 19-17 vote sends the American Health Care Act to the House Rules Committee, with GOP leaders hoping to take up the bill in the full House next week.