

Idaho Academy of Family Physicians 2017 Legislative Update - Week 8

The Week Ending March 3, 2017

Ken Burgess, Veritas Advisors, LLP – IAFP Legislative Advisor

Rep. Wood abandons \$10 million program to partially address “gap population” coverage.

This week Dr. Fred Wood announced that he would not bring forward for a hearing the bill he introduced earlier in the legislative session to partially address health care coverage for a portion of that population without said coverage ([H160](#)). The bill would have used \$10 million from the Millennium Fund tobacco settlement money.

Rep. Wood is chairman of the House Health and Welfare Committee and was quoted as saying he would not be able to get the proposal passed by his own committee, let alone by the full House of Representatives.

This effectively means that nothing is likely to be proposed this year to address the so-called “gap-population” who cannot obtain affordable health care insurance coverage.

Telehealth Reimbursement Parity bill to be amended

[S1058](#) A bill geared toward gaining parity on reimbursement rates for telehealth medical consultations was introduced and heard in the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee required two days of testimony. This proposal is the brain child of Dr. Scott Dunn, IAFP Board member in Sandpoint. The bill would allow costs for telehealth services to be covered in the same manner, and to the same extent as if the same services were delivered in person. The bill received support from the Idaho Hospital Association, AARP and the Idaho Primary Care Association. Dr. Ted Epperly testified in favor as did Neva Santos. Health insurance companies opposed the bill. The committee ultimately decided to try to amend the bill to be satisfactory to both sides. This amounts to the legislators forcing the parties together to come up with an agreeable solution. It remains to be seen if that solution can be found before the session ends. This bill has certainly opened up a broader conversation about telehealth services and will start a more serious dialog among the parties about the use and proper reimbursement of telehealth services.

Physician Meet and Greet at the Capitol: You are invited to attend a “Meet & Greet” and “Address to Legislators” with local physicians on Thursday, March 9, 2017. Please plan to join physicians on the First Floor Rotunda at 12:30 p.m. for a presentation regarding access to healthcare in Idaho. Then stop by the Fourth Floor

any time between 12:30 and 3:30 p.m. and chat with doctors from a variety of specialties. Snacks will be provided for attendees on the Fourth Floor.

New legislation of interest this week

S1131 "Relating to Abortion" This bill would require the Department of Health and Welfare and providers to tell patients where they can get information on how to reverse a medication abortion. It would also require health care providers to provide patients with a list of locations and clinics that will provide ultrasounds prior to the abortion. It would also require the Dept. of Health and Welfare to post information on where to receive an ultrasound and information on the reversal of medication abortions on their website. The bill is being printed and is assigned to the Senate State Affairs Committee.

H250 "Abortion" This bill would repeal a law, passed in 2015 banning telemedicine abortions and chemical abortions. The 2015 law, sponsored by Idaho Chooses Life was legally challenged by Planned Parenthood and a judge found it to be unconstitutional. This legislation would repeal that law. Just introduced on Friday and will be assigned to the House State Affairs Committee.

SCR 113 "Medical residencies" Senator Chuck Winder introduced a Concurrent Resolution encouraging Idaho hospitals to develop and support more medical residencies in the state, including not only primary care and psychiatry but sub-specialty residencies. This resolution is awaiting action by the full Senate.

Other Legislation of interest:

H 195 Chiropractic "clinical nutrition" Passed the House this week 64-5 and is awaiting a hearing in Senate Health and Welfare

H 191 "Pharmacist prescribing authority" This bill passed the House unanimously this week and is awaiting a hearing in senate Health and Welfare Committee.

H004 to add the **prescribing of tobacco cessation products** to the practice of pharmacy has now unanimously passed both houses and **has been signed into law by the governor.**

H005 to enhance the use of the **Prescription Monitoring Program** for controlled substances and allow greater access to the database by pharmacists. This bill also passed both houses unanimously and **has been signed into law by the governor.**

H006 "Controlled Substances" This bill aligns Idaho law with recent DEA changes, to provide conformance DEA schedules. **Two additional products have been added to the schedule: eluxadoline and brivaracetam. Was signed into law by the governor on February 13th.**

H081 "Health Care J-1 Visa Waiver Program" Passed the House 59-8-3, **Passed Senate Health and Welfare now awaiting action by the full Senate.**

H082 “Sales Tax Exemptions for Free Medical Clinics” This bill passed the House with only 3 NO votes and is still awaiting action in the Senate Local Government and Taxation Committee.

H091 “Immunization Registry” Requiring immunization providers enter all immunizations, with the exception of adult influenza vaccines, into the Idaho Immunization Reminder Information System (IRIS). The bill failed on the House floor 26-44-0.

H 115 “Interstate Medical Licensure Compact” Authorizing the Board of Medicine to obtain criminal background check information when qualifying physicians for the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact. The compact provides expedited licensure for physicians. The bill passed the House floor 66-0-4, Passed out of Senate Health and Welfare, awaiting action by the full Senate.

H128 “Medicaid, Agreements for Services” This is a revised version of the earlier H39 and directs the Department of Health and Welfare to pursue value-based payment opportunities up to and including full-risk, provider-based managed care for the Medicaid program. The purpose is to improve health care for Medicaid participants at a reduced cost to Idaho taxpayers. Passed the House 49-18-3 and Senate Welfare, awaiting action by full Senate.

H160 “Healthcare Assistance Program” As noted above, Rep. Wood has announced he will not bring this bill forward.

H161 “Medical Lab Science Practitioners” The purpose of this bill is to provide licensure for the practice of Medical Laboratory Science.. Still awaiting hearing in House Health and Welfare.

S1058 “Telehealth Access, Cost Coverage” This legislation will bolster the success of Idaho’s Telehealth Access Act. As noted above. The bill has been referred to Senate “amending” calendar for possible amendments.

S1060 “Healthcare/Cytomegalovirus” Provides funding for the Department of Health and Welfare to develop and disseminate educational material ensure the women of Idaho and their doctors have access to the most accurate and up-to-date information available regarding cytomegalovirus (CMV) prevention, infection, and treatment. Passed the Senate 31-3 is in House Health and Welfare for committee hearing.

S1081 “Immunization Assessment Board” This bill resets the Sunset date for the Immunization Assessment Board from 2017 to July 1, 2019. Passed the Senate 29-6-0. Passed the Senate 29-6-0, passed House Health and Welfare Committee, awaiting action by the full House.

S1106 To revise the legal age for possession or use of tobacco. This bill would raise the legal age of use/possession/acquiring of tobacco to 21. Twenty people signed up to testify on this bill Friday morning. Among those about 2/3 were in support and 1/3 was in opposition. After a long hearing the committee voted to hold the bill in committee, essentially killing the bill for the year.

Don’t miss the IAFP “Excellence in Primary Care Seminar” on March 17 and

18, 2017 at Schweitzer Mountain Resort in Sandpoint, Idaho.

Experience the unparalleled snow on Schweitzer Mountain and earn up to 7 CME Credits. The amazing ski experience of Schweitzer Mountain is just a few minutes up the hill from beautiful Lake Pend Oreille and the picturesque town of Sandpoint. Log on to the IAFP Web page: <http://idahofamilyphysicians.org/excellence-in-primary-care-seminar/> for more information about activities and events.

If you have questions regarding a piece of legislation or you would like the IAFP to monitor specific legislation that is not currently being monitored, please contact Neva Santos, IAFP Executive Director at Idahoafp@aol.com or (208) 323-1156.