

## LEGISLATION

### Prior Authorization:

Last year, Sen. Curt VanderWall (R-Ludington), the Chair of the Senate Health Policy Committee, introduced legislation calling for procedures and protocols to be established before the use of prior authorization by insurance companies. MRS has been a member of the "Health Can't Wait" coalition which has been advocating prior authorization reform. Unfortunately, major insurers such as Blue Cross/Blue Shield were successful in amending last session's version of the legislation to the point where even the Coalition opposed its passage. Consequently, the bill died at the end of session. In March, Sen. VanderWall introduced SB 247, a revised version of last session's bill. While SB 247 is not as strong as last session's bill as originally introduced, it is still supported by the Coalition. SB 247 has unanimously passed the Senate and was sent to the House. In an attempt to get the best final product, it is anticipated that legislation on the subject will also be introduced in the House, which will be more to the Coalition's liking. The strategy here is to leverage the House legislation in negotiations with the Senate. Another dynamic involves House and Senate strategy. Even though both Houses are controlled by the GOP, each House is holding legislation passed by the other in order to obtain the best possible horse trade.

### Upgrade Standards for Radiographic Technologists:

HB 5116, sponsored by Rep. Rodney Wakeman (R-Saginaw) establishes education and training standards for those who operate sophisticated imaging equipment. Currently, Michigan is an outlier among states, mandating requirements for only mammography and CT operation. MRS is supportive but has suggestions as to how to make the bill stronger. The legislation is with the House Health Policy Committee where a hearing was expected this fall. However, that Committee will first consider legislation to address the Benton Harbor water crisis. Expect a Committee hearing after the Holidays.

### Essential Health Provider Legislation:

SB 246, sponsored by Sen. VanderWall, would increase the debt limit the State would pay for an individual who has taken part in the essential health provider repayment program from \$200,000 to \$300,000 over a ten-year period. SB 435, sponsored by Sen. Michael MacDonald (R-Macomb), expands the list of health care professions that would qualify for the program to include behavioral sciences. These bills have passed the Senate and are now with the House Committee on Health Policy where actions expected before the Spring.

## REGULATORY

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Certificate of Need Commissions is scheduled for January 27. Future meetings of MRI informal work group to consider standards and utilization will be held on January 13 and February 17.