



# Legislative Update

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## OVERVIEW

The legislature is on spring breath until April 12. Before leaving it appropriated approximately \$4.7 billion directly, mostly for improvement in the State's aging infrastructure. The legislature also passed legislation calling for a procedure and protocol for the practice of prior authorization by insurance companies. It now appears that congressional and legislative districts, as redrawn by the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, will remain intact in spite of some lawsuits challenging their legality. One of the more interesting races pit Democratic incumbents Andy Levin and Haley Stevens. All state constitutional offices are subject to election in 2022. Accordingly, once the legislature passes a budget for FY 2022-23, which is expected by the middle of June, thereafter, legislators eligible to run for re-election will be eager to go back to their districts to campaign for the primary elections in August.

## LEGISLATION

### **Nurses Seek to Practice Radiology:**

SB 680, sponsored by Sen. Rick Outman, (R-Six Lakes) would establish the category of "certified nurse practitioners" (CNP) in statute and would greatly expand their scope of practice. The bill allows a CNP to determine a diagnosis, which is, in essence, the practice of medicine. The bill also allows CNPs to prescribe pharmacological and non-pharmacological "interventions and treatments" that are within their specialty role. Finally, the bill allows CNPs to supervise others and to order, perform, supervise and interpret laboratory and imaging studies. Clearly, this is the practice of medicine and radiology.

MRS is working with MSMS to defeat this bill. I am heading up an initial grassroots effort as an initial step. The bill is still with the Senate Health Policy and Human Services Committee.

### **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. SB 247 finally received a hearing before the House Health Policy Committee on March 22. Thereafter, the House approved its substitute and the Senate concurred in the bill. The legislation was presented to the Governor for her signature on March 29.

**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 and has received it's first hearing. Another hearing on the bill is expected later this spring.

**Essential Health Provider Legislation:**

SB 246, sponsored by Sen. VanderWall, increases 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 the House and were signed into law by the Governor on March 24.

**REGULATORY**

On April 28, the PET Standard Advisory Committee will meet in Lansing. Those wishing to attend may attend virtually. For more information on how you can attend virtually, please contact me.

