



2020 LEGISLATURE: IMA STATUS REPORT

Week of January 13 – January 17, 2020

Top Priority Issues:

Graduate Medical Education (GME) - *SUPPORT*

Next week, the Joint Finance Appropriations Committee (JFAC) will hear budget proposals from the state's many education programs, including the state's health education programs. While the original GME proposal included \$1.5 million for 25 residency positions, the current proposal from Gov. Little still funds 25 residency positions but reduces the funded amount to \$1.25 million. Once the health education presentation is made to JFAC, the IMA lobby team will immediately begin working with JFAC members to secure the funding.

Status: *JFAC will hold budget hearings on health education programs on Monday, January 20, Tuesday, January 21 and Friday, January 24.*

Liability Protection for Volunteer Healthcare Providers - *SUPPORT*

Idaho has existing laws to protect certain types of healthcare professionals from liability when they volunteer to provide free medical care. Some providers who are not covered by existing statutes include counselors, social workers, psychologists, physical therapists, pharmacists and dietitians. IMA will work to amend Idaho Code 39-7702 (4) to provide immunity from liability for all properly licensed, certified and registered healthcare professionals while they are volunteering their services in free clinics. The change will also include students in these same professional fields, provided they are supervised by one of the above professionals who is present in the facility while they provide care.

Status: *This legislation has been drafted and we expect it to be introduced soon.*

HB 317: Surgical Authority for Optometrists – *OPPOSE*

IMA and the Idaho Society of Ophthalmologists have worked with the Idaho Optometric Physicians for more than two years to try to reach a consensus on legislation that would allow optometrists to expand their scope of practice to a level that matches their current education and training. Unfortunately, the optometrists have repeatedly rejected the concerns of Idaho ophthalmologists and are seeking legislation that will give them a scope of practice expansion

with surgical authority. This is particularly concerning because there is no standardized curriculum for schools of optometry, especially when it comes to advanced procedures.

Status: *This bill will be heard in the House Health & Welfare Committee on Thursday, January 23.*

Controversial Department of Health and Welfare Rules Adopted - *SUCCESS*

This week, both the House and Senate Health and Welfare Committees adopted the Department of Health and Welfare's rules regarding vaccinations and newborn screening services. Individuals who oppose vaccines in general—in this case, school vaccine mandates—as well as required infant health screenings waged a battle against these rules, but ultimately both committees adopted the rules. The subject of immunizations and government mandates in healthcare is an ongoing debate in the legislature and these controversies appear in some form each year. IMA will keep you informed as those issues surface. We appreciate the willingness of IMA members to engage with their legislators as necessary on these important issues.

Status: *Adopted by both the House and the Senate.*

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Healthcare Bills on the IMA Tracking List**](#)