



2021 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

March 12, 2021

GME funding bill introduced in the Senate

The health education portion of the State Board of Education budget, which overwhelmingly passed the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee last week, was assigned to the Senate as SB 1175. This appropriations bill provides \$900,000 of new state funding for 15 GME positions throughout the state in family practice and psychiatry. The sponsor of the bill is Sen. Ward-Engelking (D-Boise) and the IMA lobby team will continue to advocate for support and passage of the bill through the Legislature and to the governor's desk in the coming weeks.

Status: SB 1175 is awaiting consideration before the full Senate

IMA supported legislation on telehealth pauses in House

After a successful 30-5 passage in the Senate, SB 1126 will not move forward this session due to concerns with harmful amendments being added in the House Health and Welfare Committee. The IMA lobby team became aware of efforts to eliminate the legislative text of SB 1126 and replace it with language replicating HB 179, which would permanently allow out-of-state providers to practice telehealth on Idaho patients without an Idaho license. Eliminating the recommendations of the Telehealth Task Force (TTF) to maintain and expand telehealth in Idaho and replacing it with policy that significantly disadvantages Idaho patients and physicians was an outcome the IMA and other stakeholders chose to avoid. IMA will continue to work with telehealth proponents, payers and others to advance provisions that will strengthen and streamline Idaho's telehealth statute.

Status: SB 1126 is being held in the House Health and Welfare Committee and will not advance this session

Legislation to license “uneducated” naturopaths held in committee

On March 9, SB 1128, which would license naturopaths who did not graduate from an accredited naturopathic medical school, was held in the Senate Health and Welfare Committee subject to the call of the chair. IMA Director of Government Affairs Jamie Neill testified in opposition to SB 1128, stating concerns with the significant overreach in scope of practice for unlicensed naturopaths and no requirement for a degree from an accredited institution. Upon request of the committee, IMA agreed to meet with the proponents of SB 1128 to discuss future legislation. The IMA will oppose any legislation that allows licensure of naturopaths beyond their scope of education and training.

Status: SB 1128 was held in the Senate Health and Welfare Committee subject to the call of the chair

Medicaid budget passes JFAC

On March 8, The Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee passed the Medicaid budget by a vote of 17-2 for fiscal year 2022. The bill fully funds the entire Medicaid budget without cost containment measures and allows Medicaid to transfer funds between all the various Medicaid budgets. Last year, the Medicaid expansion program was not allowed this authority, which resulted in the temporary hold on reimbursement to providers that IMA reported on last week.

Status: Awaiting consideration before the House and Senate

Federal update

\$1.9 trillion stimulus bill signed into law by President Biden

On March 11, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan. The legislation provides \$1,400 direct payments to individuals making up to \$75,000 a year, \$350 billion in aid to state and local governments, \$14 billion for vaccine distribution, roughly \$130 billion to K-12 education to assist with safe reopening, and more. Idaho is set to receive the state portion of the funding as early as April, which will likely create a debate between the Legislature and governor as to who has the authority to allocate the federal funds.

The bill also expands the Affordable Care Act income threshold to enable those who currently do not qualify for 2021 and 2022 to receive subsidies, and it expands the amount of the subsidy for those that already qualify in 2021 and 2022.

Becerra advances in the Senate

On March 11, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, Biden’s nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services, advanced on a procedural vote which increases the likelihood he will be confirmed this

week. Becerra was a former California Congressman and has the endorsement of the American Medical Association.

To view a list of ALL healthcare-related bills and their statuses, visit the IMA Bill Tracker on the IMA website

IMA Bill Tracker

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The IMA Political Action Committee (IMPAC) Board uses your contributions to support a variety of bi-partisan candidates based on the best interests of Idaho physicians and their patients.

With the pandemic and constantly changing health care policies, it is more important now than ever that IMA has the resources to support legislators who will listen to our concerns. IMPAC needs your contributions now to support the house of medicine in Idaho!

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