

Florida Academy of Family Physicians
2024 Legislative Session- Week 7
February 23, 2024

The legislature concluded week 7 of the 9-week legislative session with each chamber taking final action on the other's priority issues. The House passed Senate President Passidomo's Live Healthy Initiative (SB 7016 and SB 7018) and took final action on Speaker Renner's Social Media Protections for Minors initiative (HB 1) after the Senate passed and sent back to the House. House committees also held their final meetings, and the Senate has only two more committee meetings scheduled for early next week. Both chambers will spend the bulk of their remaining two weeks on the floor negotiating and debating bills for final consideration. We anticipate the budget conference process to begin next week as each chamber has passed its separate budget proposals and must act to reconcile differences. The budget conference process typically consumes the appropriators' bandwidth during week 8 and early week 9, as the budget is the only bill that the legislature must pass.



FAFP Board member Dr. Mike Cromer (left) was in town serving as Doctor of the Day on Tuesday February 20 through the sponsorship of Senator Darryl Rouson. We applaud Dr. Cromer who led a large delegation of physicians from Hillsborough County throughout the day.

Live Healthy Initiative Passes

The Live Healthy Initiative – a top priority of Senate President Kathleen Passidomo to ensure that healthcare workforce growth keeps up with the state's overall growth - passed the Legislature this week and is headed to the Governor. “Live Healthy” is a comprehensive legislative package aimed at bolstering Florida's healthcare workforce, enhancing access, and fostering innovation. The bill includes over [\\$716 million in funding](#) and includes the following provisions via two bills:

[CS/SB 7016](#) (See detailed bill analysis [here](#)). Highlights include:

- (\$247m) Medicaid Provider Rate Increases
- (\$30m) Expands the list of or eligible practitioners in the Florida Reimbursement Assistance for Medical Education (FRAME) Program. \$13 million of the \$16 million in 2023 funding was awarded to MD/DO physicians.
- (\$50m) Funds up to 200 residency slots in the Statewide Medicaid Residency Program;
- (\$25m) Creates the Training, Education, and Clinicals in Health (TEACH) Funding Program to provide a high-quality educational experience while supporting participating federally qualified health centers, community mental health centers, rural health clinics, and certified community behavioral health clinics;
- Creates the Health Care Screening and Services Grant Program to fund the provisions of no-cost health care screenings or services for the general public by nonprofit entities.;
- Creates advanced birth center designations;
- Expands the Telehealth Minority Maternity Care Program into a statewide program;

- Creates the Access to Health Care Act who provide protections against liability for health care providers who offer free quality medical services to underserved populations in Florida.
- Revises the definition of and standards for clinical psychologists and psychiatric nurses;
- Revises licensure for foreign-trained physicians;
- Revises certification of foreign medical schools and medical faculty;
- Revises requirements for autonomous-practice nurse midwives;
- Establishes emergency department diversion requirements for hospitals and Medicaid managed care plans;
- Creates limited licenses for graduate assistant physicians and temporary certificates for physician assistants (PA) and advanced practice registered nurses (APRN) to practice in areas of critical need; and
- Provides that Florida will enter into the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact, and the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact

[SB 7018](#) creates the Health Care Innovation Council, a 15-member council within the Department of Health (DOH) – and funds the Council through 2035 - to facilitate public meetings across the state to lead discussions with innovators, developers, and implementers of technologies, workforce pathways, service delivery models, or other solutions. (See detailed bill analysis [here](#)).

Based on the public input and information gathered at public meetings, the bill requires the council to create best practice recommendations and focus areas for the advancement of the delivery of health care in Florida, with an emphasis on:

- Increasing efficiency in the delivery of health care;
- Reducing strain on the health care workforce;
- Increasing public access to health care;
- Improving patient outcomes;
- Reducing unnecessary emergency department visits; and
- Reducing costs for patients and the state without reducing the quality of patient care.

[SB 322](#) creates public records and public meeting exemptions for the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC), the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact, and the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact.

FAFP Priority Legislation

Invalid Restrictive Covenants with Physicians – [HB 11](#) by Rep. Dr. Joel Rudman (R-Navarre) and [SB 458](#) by Sen. Jason Brodeur (R-Lake Mary) provide restrictive covenants which prohibit physician from practicing medicine within specified area for certain period of time are void and unenforceable. The FAFP is working with the sponsors to ensure appropriateness and address any concerns and misinformation used to prevent passage. While positive momentum for this priority legislation was achieved during its first year of being heard, the legislation will take several years to gain favorable passage.

SB 458 was approved by the Senate Commerce Committee on Tuesday, 2/6, and Health Policy in week 4. HB 11 was not heard in committee this session. Although these bills will not pass in 2024, the FAFP will continue to work to pass this legislation in 2025.

Legislation of Interest to Family Medicine (listed alphabetically)

Background Screening Requirements for Health Care Practitioners – [HB 975](#) by Rep. Dana Trabulsky (R-Fort Pierce) and [SB 1008](#) by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Pierce) expand certain

background screening requirements to apply to all health care practitioners, rather than specified practitioners.

HB 975 was approved by the House Health and Human Services Committee on Thursday, 2/22.

SB 1008 was approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee on HHS on Tuesday, 2/13.

Civil Liability for the Wrongful Death of an Unborn Child – [HB 651](#) by Rep. Jenna Persons-Mulicka (R-Fort Myers) and [SB 476](#) by Sen. Erin Grall (R-Fort Pierce) revise the definition of term "survivors" to include parents of an unborn child, provide definition for term "unborn child," prohibit right of action against a mother for wrongful death of unborn child, and authorize parents of an unborn child to recover certain damages.

HB 651 has passed all House committees and is available on the House calendar.

SB 476 will be heard in the Senate Rules Committee on Monday, 2/26.

Congenital Cytomegalovirus Screenings – [SB 168](#) by Sen. Tina Polsky (D-Boca Raton) and [HB 499](#) by Rep. Lauren Melo (R-Naples) expand the population which must undergo mandatory CCMV testing beyond the current population of infants who fail the hearing screening to include infants admitted to neonatal intensive care units, and newborns who are transferred to another facility for a higher level of care.

HB 499 has passed all House committees and is available on the House calendar.

SB 168 was approved by the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee on Thursday, 2/22.

Coverage for Skin Cancer Screenings – [SB 56](#) by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) and [HB 241](#) by Rep. Dr. Ralph Massullo (R-Inverness) require Florida State Group Health Insurers to provide coverage and payment for annual skin cancer screenings performed by a licensed dermatologist without imposing any cost-sharing requirement.

HB 241 will be heard on the House Special Order Calendar on Tuesday, 2/27.

SB 56 has passed all Senate committees and is available on the Senate calendar.

Coverage of Biomarker Testing – [SB 964](#) by Sen. Alexis Calatayud (R-Miami) and [HB 885](#) by Rep. Karen Gonzalez Pittman (R-Tampa) require the Agency for Health Care Administration and managed care plans to provide specified coverage of biomarker testing under the Medicaid program. The bills also require State Group Insurance to cover biomarker testing.

HB 885 was approved by the House Health and Human Services Committee on Thursday, 2/22.

SB 964 was approved by the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee on Thursday, 2/22.

Emergency Refills of Insulin and Insulin-related Supplies or Equipment – [HB 201](#) by Rep. Melanie Bell (R-Fort Meade) and [SB 516](#) by Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez (R-Doral) authorize emergency refill of specified amounts of insulin and insulin-related supplies or equipment.

HB 201 passed the House 118-0 on Thursday, 2/15 and has been sent to the Senate. SB 516 has passed all Senate committees and is available on the Senate calendar.

Health Care Practitioner Titles and Designations – [SB 1112](#) by Sen. Gayle Harrell (R-Stuart) and [HB 1295](#) by Rep. Dr. Ralph Massullo (R-Inverness) provide that, for specified purposes, the use of specified titles or designations in connection with one's name constitutes the practice of medicine or the practice of osteopathic medicine, revise grounds for disciplinary action relating to a practitioner's use of such titles or designations in identifying himself or herself to patients or in advertisements for health care services, and require certain health care practitioners to wear name tags.

HB 1295 has passed all House committees and is available on the House calendar. SB 1112 passed the Senate 38-1 on Thursday, 2/15.

HIV Infection Prevention Drugs – [HB 159](#) by Rep. Franklin Gallop (D-Tallahassee) and [SB 1320](#) by Sen. Alexis Calatayud (R-Miami) allows licensed pharmacists to screen adults for HIV exposure and provide the results of such screening. A pharmacist who has screened a patient for HIV must advise the patient to seek further medical consultation or treatment from a physician. The bill also establishes a process by which a pharmacist may become certified to order and dispense postexposure prophylaxis under a collaborative practice agreement with a physician.

[HB 159 passed the House 117-0 on Thursday, 2/22 and has been sent to the Senate.](#)

[SB 1320 will be heard in the Senate Rules Committee on Monday, 2/26.](#)

Interstate Mobility - [HB 1381](#) by Rep. Danny Alvarez (R-Riverview) [HB 1273](#) by Rep. Plasencia (R-Winter Park) and [SB 1600](#) by Sen. Jay Collins (R-Tampa) require respective boards of occupations, or the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) if there is no board to issue license or certificate to applicants who meet specified conditions, require DOH to verify certain information using National Practitioner Data Bank, specify circumstances under which person is ineligible for licensing, authorize boards or DOH to revoke license upon specified finding, authorize boards or DOH to require that applicants successfully complete jurisprudential examination, revise licensure by endorsement requirements for multiple health care practitioner licenses.

[HB 1381 has not been heard this Session. HB 1273 will be heard on the House Special Order Calendar on Tuesday, 2/27. SB 1600 will be heard in the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee on Tuesday, 2/27.](#)

Office Surgeries – [HB 1561](#) by Rep. Demi Busatta Cabrera (R-Coral Gables) and [SB 1188](#) by Sen. Iliana Garcia (R-Miami) provide additional enforcement authority to the Department of Health (DOH) over offices in which physicians perform certain liposuction procedures, including gluteal fat grafting procedures.

[HB 1561 was approved by the House Health and Human Services Committee on Thursday, 2/22.](#)

[SB 1188 was approved by the Senate Fiscal Policy Committee on Thursday, 2/22.](#)

Payments for Health Care Providers and Surgical Procedures under Workers' Compensation – [HB 161](#) by Rep. Dan Daley (D-Coral Springs) and [SB 362](#) by Sen. Jennifer Bradley (R-Fleming Island) increase the maximum amounts of certain witness fees related to workers' compensation cases and increases maximum reimbursements for physicians & surgical procedures under workers' compensation.

[HB 161 was approved by the House Commerce Committee on Thursday, 2/22. SB 362 has passed all Senate committees and is available on the Senate calendar.](#)

Short-acting Bronchodilator Use in Public and Private Schools – [HB 883](#) by Rep. Traci Koster (R-Tampa) and [SB 962](#) by Sen. Ed Hooper (R-Palm Harbor) authorize schools to acquire stock a supply of short-acting bronchodilators to administer to students in respiratory distress.

[HB 883 will be heard on the House Special Order Calendar on Tuesday, 2/27.](#)

[SB 962 has passed all Senate committees and is available on the Senate calendar.](#)

Sickle Cell Care Management and Treatment Education for Physicians – [HB 349](#) by Rep. Felicia Simone Robinson (D-Miami Gardens) [SB 552](#) by Sen. Darryl Rouson (D-St. Petersburg) require education on sickle cell care management and treatment protocols for physicians to renew a license and requires the Department of Health to evaluate physician survey results and annually report to Governor and Legislature on patient outcomes as result of such education. The Senate Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services introduced [SB 7070](#) implementing a with Sickle Cell disease research and treatment grant program at the Department of Health. Unlike HB 349 and SB 552, SB 7070 does not contain a mandatory CME provision.

[HB 349 was approved by the House Healthcare Regulation Subcommittee on Thursday, 2/1.](#)

[SB 552 has not been heard this session.](#)

SB 7070 will be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on Tuesday, 2/27.