

FCAAP Legislative Update

With so much happening over the summer, the 2015 Regular Session is now a distant memory. During the 2015 Regular Session the House would not accept Senate efforts to expand Medicaid, and they could not agree on how to extend Low Income Pool funding for hospitals. These disagreements led to the House ending its Session 4 days earlier than scheduled, causing many bills to die on the calendar (including the budget). However, during the Regular Session the Legislature did pass HB 1055 (a Florida Chapter priority) which provided that (1) the Statewide Medical Director for Child Protection must be a board-certified pediatrician with a subspecialty certification in child abuse from the American Board of Pediatrics; (2) the medical directors of the 23 CPTs must be a board-certified pediatrician with either a subspecialty certification in child abuse from the American Board of Pediatrics OR a certain credential recognizing specialized competence in child abuse pediatrics; (3) out of state expert witnesses in criminal child abuse cases must secure from the Department of Health a certificate authorizing expert testimony; and (4) CIRRTs include a CPT medical director. This bill was sponsored by Rep. Gayle Harrell and Sen. Rob Bradley.

Following the Regular Session there have already been two Special Sessions with another to come. During Special Session A (June 15 – 19) the Legislature passed a budget which included a temporary resolution of LIP but did not include any sort of Medicaid expansion. During Special Session B (August 10 – 21) the Legislature unable to agree upon new congressional district maps as ordered by the Florida Supreme Court. Special Session C is scheduled for late October to redraw the state senate maps which the Legislature has admitted are unconstitutional.

While the Legislature continues the redistricting odyssey, it is simultaneously working toward the 2016 Regular Session which begins on January 12. The first committee week will be held from September 16 – 18. The House established the Select Committee on Health Care Affordability which will look at issues such as repeal of CON, scope of practice expansion, hospital charge transparency, and physician practice reciprocity. Other anticipated healthcare legislation includes telehealth, direct pay primary care, and repeal of Kidcare waiting list for legal immigrant children.

In addition to supporting and opposing various bills as necessary, the Florida Chapter's proactive legislative focus will be on increased childhood vaccinations, mandatory middle school and high school entrance physical examinations, child protection reforms, and CMS cardiac center funding.

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