

Legislative Newsletter

April 25, 2016



Session to Adjourn This Week

The end of session is imminent, which always means a flurry of activity and last minute pushes to get legislation through. Session is anticipated to adjourn this week. Before the fall of the gavel, however, there are still several issues to resolve.

The Senate Appropriations committee took up the Health and Human Services budget (House File 2460) after it was voted out of the House, and offered a strike-after amendment. The strike-after preserved agreed upon language, but added appropriations to three urban counties to cover mental health funding: \$2.5 million to Polk County, and \$250,000 each to Scott and Johnson Counties. Legislators anticipate this bill will go to conference committee to resolve legislative oversight of the Medicaid Managed Care change. Managed care took effect April 1.

On the House side, Representatives battled out the mental health levy bill vehicle we have been opposing (House File 2456/House Study Bill 650) in favor of our own language (Senate File 2381).

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HF 2456 essentially kicks the can down the road for another year, by extending the present mental health levy calculation for one more fiscal year. The House language passed the House last week 74-24; however, the Senate has implied that they will not concur with this language.

Our efforts should include some mechanism to put absolute pressure on the General Assembly and Governor and those groups opposed to lifting the 1996 dollar cap (Farm Bureau) to solve this problem, as they have promised to do so for several years.

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