

Legislative Newsletter

March 23, 2018

Mental Health Bill Goes to Gov

The chambers sent several bills to Gov. Reynolds' desk this past week. Among them:

House File 2456: Mental Health Reform: This bill makes changes to procedures involving involuntary commitments, including on dismissal of actions; changes to procedures on disclosures of information by mental health professionals to law enforcement. It requires the state Mental Health/Disability Services Commission to have rules on assertive community treatment teams, access centers and intensive residential services, and encourages development of subacute treatment facilities. Finally, the bill requires any matching federal funds under the Iowa Health & Wellness Plan to be made available, with service requirements across the state.

House File 2285: EMS Supplemental: This bill directs Department of Human Services to seek a Medicaid/Medicare waiver to allow the payment of a supplemental reimbursement for EMS ground transportation. This bill came out of both chambers unanimously.

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Senate File 2334: Behavioral Hospitals: This bill allows the DIA to approve the transfer of a license for a behavioral hospital to a person or government that intends to offer behavioral health services. This bill came out of both chambers unanimously.

The House passed:

Senate File 192: Licensing of Behavioral Analysts: Establishes licensing provisions for behavioral analysts and assistant behavioral analysts. Includes provisions on board membership, on education requirements and exceptions, and on other related matters. Effective January, 2019, but allows the board to begin work prior to that. This bill passed out of the House unanimously and will return to the Senate due to an adopted amendment. Senate File 2117: Deappropriations: This amended deappropriations bill makes net cuts of \$32 million. The House reduced a lot of the cuts the Senate had proposed to \$22 million and proposed \$2.2 million in supplemental funding:

- Regents (\$8.1 million) and the community colleges (\$500,000);
- The Judicial Branch (\$1.6 million);
- The Department of Human Services (\$4.32 million);
- The Department of Corrections \$3.4 million;
- The Department of Education (\$784,000);
- The Department of Public Health (\$625,000).

The House amended the bill to exclude the legislative per diem reductions. The Senate had proposed cutting the per diem days from 100 to 85. The bill had restored the three-month retroactive eligibility for Medicaid for persons in long-term care facilities

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and includes Medicaid ground transportation supplemental reimbursement language, though that was struck by amendment on the House floor. The bill passed on party lines and will be returned to the Senate.

The House has also introduced a TIF bill, House Study Bill 681. The bill excludes school property taxes and property taxes for basic county services from TIF revenue divisions. It allows schools to voluntarily transfer these taxes to a city, but it does not allow these transfers to reduce school foundation aid received by the school district. Allows the county to make similar transfers. This bill would take effect for property taxes due in FY 2020 and later.

The coming week is anticipated to be short, due to the Easter holiday.

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