

2012 Idaho Legislature

Week in Review

March 9th, 2012

Budgets and bills continue to make headway as we enter the 9th week of the 2012 legislative session. On Friday the Medicaid budget, the last and one of the largest agency budgets, was passed unanimously out of JFAC. Super Tuesday caused a lot of excitement as the Republican Party held their first Idaho Presidential caucus; Romney won the majority of counties and thus the state's 32 caucus votes. In other news, it appears as though the legislative ethics committee has not and probably will not reach consensus, making the reality of ethics reform this session bleak.

The Joint Finance and Acquisitions Committee (JFAC) has been busy deciding the budgets for various health related programs. The Joint Millennium Fund Committee's recommendations were unanimously agreed upon and \$5.7 million will be allocated to health and tobacco cessation projects. JFAC denied funding to attract rural physicians and also rejected a measure to increase funding for foster parents. Substance abuse treatment programs received a 0.9% increase which may prove inadequate to address some of the wait-listing issues these programs face. The State Hospital South, a state funded mental health facility was approved for 10 additional direct care personnel as well as some equipment upgrades. The hospital has faced enormous shortages to the point its accreditation was considered to be in jeopardy. Overall, Mental Health budgets received a 2.4% increase. The Medicaid budget was set with an 8.7% increase over last year, and funding was included for HB 609 which restores some of the Medicaid services for the disabled.

[HB609 PUBLIC ASSISTANCE LAW](#) has passed the house (65-0-5). This bill will restore \$1.5 million of the \$35 million in Medicaid cuts from last year. Preventative dental services, duplicative skill training for individuals with both mental and developmental disabilities have been restored and the tiered individual budgets for adults removed.

[H0393 RURAL HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND PHYSICIAN INCENTIVE](#) has passed both the House (66-2-2) and the Senate (33-0-1) and awaits the Governor's signature. [HB405 ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES](#) has also passed both the House (68-0-2) and Senate (34-0-0) and has been signed into law. As of 07/01/12 minors will not be able to legally purchase electronic cigarettes.

[HB548 YOUTH ATHLETES – CONCUSSIONS](#) has passed the State Affairs Committee. Former BSU football player, Matt Kaiserman, has been a vocal supporter of the bill which passed committee on a 15-3 vote. Kaiserman himself suffers from headaches as a result of head injury.

[SB1348 DISCRIMINATION IN DENIAL OF LIFE-PRESERVING TREATMENT ACT](#), by Sen. Nuxoll (R- Cottonwood) will be heard on Monday in Senate State Affairs. The sponsor says that the purpose of this legislation to protect patients from the involuntary denial of food and fluids.

[SB1349 ABORTION](#), which would require a woman to have an ultrasound before receiving an abortion, was the target of protesters on the Capital steps this week. The bill, sponsored by Senator Chuck Winder (R-Boise) and others, will be heard on Wednesday in the Senate State Affairs Committee.

Health Insurance Exchange

[HCR45 PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE](#) has passed the business committee (14-3). This concurrent resolution encourages private health insurance companies to use their reserves to set up a health insurance exchange. The committee vote fell along party lines.

Nursing Legislation

[SB1260](#), [SB1261](#), [SB1262](#), and [SB1273](#) all passed unanimously from the House Health and Welfare Committee on Thursday. They now await a final vote by the full House. [SB1294 IDAHO MEDICAL CONSENT ACT](#) which revises the POST document to include Advanced Practice Registered Nurses and Physician Assistants, has passed the Senate and will be heard in the House Health and Welfare Committee on Monday, March 12 in the afternoon.

Legislation of Interest

To view summaries and updates of additional legislation IPHA is following throughout the 2012 session, click [HERE](#). To be routed to a full text version of each bill, click on the bill's title in blue. The Idaho Legislature home page also offers a free bill tracking service that provides email alerts regarding any status changes. To sign up, click [HERE](#)