

February 17, 2020

In order to be responsive to the latest legislative developments, MOCPA continually monitors proposed legislation. The society utilizes both professional and grassroots lobbyists to ensure the CPA profession has a voice in Jefferson City. By keeping members informed, MOCPA is empowering you to contribute to the legislative process.

Update provided by Chuck Pierce, CPA, MOCPA government relations consultant

Session Update

The Senate ran some trial balloons on potentially controversial issues last week and moved two *Wayfair* bills to the next level. The House passed a prescription drug monitoring bill. A House committee held the first hearing looking into the award process for the medical marijuana licenses.

In a preview of coming attractions, the Senate tested the waters for what promises to be a long debate during the session by giving floor time to some controversial legislation. Tort reform promises to be a big focus of debate in the Senate this year. Bills that would make changes to punitive damage, limit claims to asbestos settlements, and change the Merchandising Practices Act were all debated last week. After several hours of debate with no resolution in sight, the bills were placed on the informal calendar. This is a frequent tactic of the Senate on controversial matters. The parties use the debate to stake out their positions, the bills are laid over, then negotiations begin to reach a consensus.

The Senate took steps to move the state closer to a law establishing economic nexus for remote sellers. Two bills, [SB 648](#) and [SB 529](#), were voted out of their respective committees. The bills are very similar in how they implement nexus, but they differ dramatically in how to handle the new revenue. One would use the new revenue to fund an income tax cut, and the other would use it to establish a budgetary reserve and pay down debt. The income tax cut is the method preferred by several senators, and the reserve fund is the method recommended by Governor Parson. The use of the money, not the technical aspects of the bills, look to be where all the debate will center.

The House passed a bill establishing a prescription drug monitoring program. Missouri is the only state that has not established a program. The House has passed legislation several years in a row, but it has died in the Senate every year. It remains to be seen if it will fare any better this year than in the past. Early indications are that it still faces opposition in the Senate.

Last week, the House Committee on Government Oversight held a hearing to begin its investigation into the awarding of medical marijuana licenses. Legislators have expressed concerns over whether the process of reviewing the applications was proper. Because there were many more applications than licenses granted and the fees were nonrefundable, there is a lot of angst from the vendors who were not successful. This is the same House committee that conducted a review of the Department

of Revenue and the withholding tables last year. In that matter, the committee held several hearings and heard a lot of testimony from the department. The cannabis licensing process looks like it will receive similar scrutiny this year.

Legislation of Interest

[Click here](#) to view the complete list of high-priority bills MOCPA is currently tracking. New bills are introduced regularly and added to the list. Be sure to check the list often to look for legislation that may be of interest to you or your clients.

For Additional Information

This *Government Advocacy Update* will continue weekly through the legislative session. If you have any questions on MOCPA's government advocacy efforts, please visit the [Web page](#), or contact [Dena Hull](#) at (800) 264-7966, ext. 105.

Related Links

- Become a [Legislative Keyperson](#)
- Contribute to [MO CPA-PAC](#)

Click [here](#) to unsubscribe