



Government Advocacy Update

PROTECTING YOUR INTERESTS

February 20, 2017

In order to be responsive to the latest legislative developments, the MSCPA 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, the MSCPA is empowering you to contribute to the legislative process.

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

Session Update

Both chambers continued on their steady pace of advancing leadership's priority legislation last week. Budget hearings have begun in earnest in both chambers. Gov. Greitens stepped up the pace on his appointments by naming three new cabinet level directors, two of which have a big impact on Missouri CPAs—Department of Revenue Director, and Director of the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration (DIFP).

The Senate continued to advance its agenda to make changes that affect organized labor by passing a bill revising laws on project labor agreements. They also stayed the course on tort reform issues by passing legislation addressing hospital liability for contract employees, and debating a bill on arbitration agreements. While the Senate is making progress on leadership's priorities, these efforts are using a lot of floor time. As a result, the Senate calendar is starting to get crowded. This could create a problem for moving the non-controversial measures later in the session.

The House passed legislation addressing crimes against law enforcement. They also perfected a bill addressing the licensing requirements for hair braiding. Both of these issues were stated as priorities by the governor in his State of the State address. Because the debate rules are different in the House, this is not slowing down the calendar on the House side, which is typical. However, it's not typical that so many of the governor's legislative priorities have advanced this early in the session.

Both chambers are working on the budget in committee. Although the House technically must pass the budget first and send to the Senate, they hold hearings separately in each chamber. Therefore, when the House sends the budget to the Senate, it already has its own version. While it is much too early to draw conclusions on the budget, initial indications are that it will be a tough year for all sectors.

Gov. Greitens appointed three members of his cabinet last week. Subject to Senate confirmation, Randall Williams will serve as the Director of Health and Senior Services; Joel Walters, CPA, will be the Director of Revenue; and Chlora Lindley-Myers will be in charge of the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration.

The appointment of a new Director of Revenue has been the subject of much talk in the Capitol. In recent years, there has been legislation every year to undo a policy or tax interpretation of the Department. The hope is that a new director will bring a different outlook. Walters is an unknown in the Capitol, but his credentials are impressive. He is a CPA, an attorney, and currently serves as a tax partner for PricewaterhouseCoopers. He has previously served in top finance positions in industry.

In addition to the insurance industry, the DIFP also oversees and regulates all licensed professions, including CPAs. As such, Lindley-Myers will have much influence on changes to licensing policies, budget priorities and rules. She has a wealth of insurance experience, including some in Missouri. It is not clear yet what her philosophies on licensing regulation will be.

[Click here](#) for more information on the background of Lindley-Myers, and [here](#) to learn more about Walters.

Legislation of Interest

To view a list of high-priority bills the MSCPA is currently tracking, along with their most recent activity and current status, [click here](#).

For Additional Information

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

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