

# Government Advocacy Update



Protecting Your Interests

March 1, 2021

*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

After missing a week due to the weather, the Senate attempted to make up for it by having two late nights. Both chambers tackled the controversial issue of education reform. COVID-19 liability and *Wayfair* legislation advanced in the Senate.

The winter weather prompted the Senate to cancel its session for the week of Feb. 8-11. Senators returned to the Capitol on Feb. 22. They started off strong by working on a law enforcement bill until after midnight on Monday and doubled down by doing the same thing on Tuesday on an education bill.

Reforming the state's education system is a topic of debate every year. The debate this year has been heightened by the issues surrounding school closures and remote learning. Both chambers took up education legislation last week. In both chambers, leadership made strong speeches stating the changes were high priorities. The debate was spirited and long, but legislation was eventually approved by both the House and Senate. The bills differ, and the votes were very close. The differences will have to be worked out and compromise legislation approved by both chambers, so look for this debate to continue.

The Senate advanced legislation of interest to MOCPA members. [SB 51](#), which provides additional protection for businesses from litigation on COVID-19 related issues was passed. [SB 153](#) and [SB 287](#), both addressing *Wayfair*, were passed out of their respective committees and placed on the Senate calendar.

Much of the public reporting on [SB 51](#) has focused on the protections in the bill for medical providers and manufacturers of personal protective equipment. The bill also contains protections that impact all businesses by including protections from frivolous lawsuits related to COVID-19 exposures that occur on the businesses' premises. This bill included an emergency clause, which would have made the provisions go into effect as soon as it is signed. Absent that clause, the bill would be effective Aug. 28. The bill passed by a simple majority, but the emergency clause failed to receive the necessary two-thirds majority to pass. The bill now goes to the House for debate.

Two separate Senate committees voted out two *Wayfair* bills last week. The most significant differences between the bills are in what happens to the additional revenue attributed to the

expanded nexus. Because both bills were voted out of committee at the same time, they are likely to come up for floor debate very close to each other. Look for this to be a spirited debate when it occurs.

### **Legislation of Interest**

[Click here](#) to view the complete list of high-priority bills MOCPA is currently tracking, along with their most recent activity and current status. Be sure to check the list often for updates to 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.

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