

Government Advocacy Update



Protecting Your Interests

March 29, 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

The Legislature returned from spring break last week. Both chambers focused on advancing their own bills to the other chamber. The House Budget Committee finished its work on the budget. Legislative efforts to place limits on the authority of local health orders and the funding of Medicaid expansion both hit snags.

Last week marked the start of the second half of the session. Legislators worked on trying to move bills to the other chamber to increase the chance of getting them passed in the final part of the session. Two of the issues that have been heavily debated this session hit some obstacles.

There has been a lot of debate this session over what many legislators believe to be an overreach by local health authorities during the pandemic. Several bills have been introduced to place limits on the authorities' powers during health emergencies. The Senate version came up for debate in the Senate last week. After several hours of debate, the bill failed to pass with bipartisan majority voting no. A similar bill has passed the House, but it needs a Senate vote to become law. Some compromise will have to be reached in the Senate for that to happen.

Last year, voters approved a constitutional amendment to expand Medicaid in Missouri. The measure, however, did not include a funding provision for the state's share of the cost. How the state would fund the cost increases was heavily discussed during the campaign and since the passage of the measure. Last week, the House Budget Committee voted down the bill that contained the funding for expansion. The budget bills go to the floor next. It would be possible to override the committee with a floor vote. The House rules for voting budget bills on the floor require that any amendments increasing spending must be offset with an amendment that reduces spending in a like amount. The amendment then needs a majority vote. Based upon the dollar amount of this item and the fact that all the Republicans in the committee voted no on the bill in committee, this is highly unlikely. If this is not changed on the floor, it will be up to the Senate to provide the funding. If it does not, the issue is very likely to end up in court.

Heading into the last half of the session, the House has put two of the most controversial items of the session directly in the hands of the Senate.

Legislation of Interest

[Click here](#) to view the complete list of high-priority bills MOCPA is currently tracking. The period for filing bills has closed, so new bills cannot be filed. Bills may be amended, which may result in bills being added or removed from the list. 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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