

Government Advocacy Update



Protecting Your Interests

March 8, 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

Last week, the Legislature focused on work in the committees to get legislation on the calendar. Although floor debate in both chambers was limited, it saw some activity on issues of interest to Missouri CPAs.

The House passed two bills that are of interest to MOCPA. [HB 75](#) creates additional guidance for local government health departments to follow when establishing rules for business restrictions during health emergencies. In most cases, the new guidelines provide that orders need approval of the local governing body if enacted for longer periods of time.

The House also passed [HB 1083](#) addressing the issue of erroneous unemployment compensation payments. The CARES Act established enhanced unemployment benefits for workers displaced during the pandemic. This resulted in the Department of Labor being inundated with claims for a program that they also had to establish. Upon review, the Department found many payments that were made in error. Once the notices of overpayment began being issued, many recipients contacted their legislators. After several hearings, the House agreed to forgive the federal portion of the payments. This bill had bi-partisan support, and the legislation is expected to move quickly through the Senate.

The Senate gave a preview of the *Wayfair* debate last week with [SB 123](#), which sets uniform guidance for establishing local sales taxes and is relatively uncontroversial. When it came up for debate last week, an amendment was offered that implemented *Wayfair* provisions and used the proceeds to fund a budget reserve fund. This was the solution offered by Governor Parson, and it was immediately apparent that several senators had other ideas. After a spirited debate, the underlying bill was placed on the informal calendar with the amendment pending. The amendment will have to be dealt with before the underlying bill can go forward. Because *Wayfair* provisions are included in several other bills, there are many different paths to resolving the debate. Stay tuned.

Last week was the deadline to file legislation, which means no new bills can be filed. A bill filed on the last day faces an uphill path to passage. This creates incentives for legislators to look for bills that are moving to amend with their priorities.

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, with the exception of March 22 due to the Legislature's spring break. 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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