

Legislative Watch

presented by

GEORGIA BIO™

policy & advocacy committee



Georgia Bio Legislative Report March 6, 2020

Days 22-25 of 40 Day Session

GENERAL UPDATE:

This week the General Assembly convened on Monday, March 2nd and worked through Thursday, March 5th to complete legislative day 25. Next Thursday March 12th is “crossover day” which is the last day bills can pass their chamber of origin in order to be further considered this year.

BILL MOVEMENT:

On Wednesday March 4th the senate passed [House Bill 792](#), the Amended Fiscal Year 2020 budget. The AFY 2020 budget covers appropriations from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

The House and Senate passed/adopted several bills this week relating to pharmacies and surprise billing from pharmacy benefit managers.

[HB 789](#) sponsored by Rep. Mark Newton (R - Augusta) seeks to create a surprise bill rating system based upon the number of certain physician specialty groups contracted with a hospital within a health insurer’s network and that insurers would be required to include a hospital’s surprise bill ratings online and in print in provide directories. The bill passed the House with a 170-1 vote.

[HB 888](#) sponsored by Rep. Lee Hawkins (R - Gainesville) known as the Surprise Billing Consumer Protection Act is a similar, companion piece of legislation to [SB 359](#) sponsored by Senator Chuck Hufstetler (R – Rome) that was passed by the Senate on February 24th. The bills intent is to prevent people from receiving high hospital bills when they are unknowingly treated by out-of-network doctors in an emergency situation. The bill requires patients to pay no more than their deductible, copay or other in-network payment level determined by their plan. The bill passed the House with a 164-4 vote.

[HB 918](#) sponsored by Sharon Cooper (R-Marietta) strengthens Georgia’s Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights and the Pharmacy Anti-Steering Act which passed last year through HB 233. The bill passed the House with a 169-0 vote.

GEORGIA BIO LEGISLATIVE TRACKING SHEET

Georgia Bio will provide updates on specific legislation of interest to the Georgia Bio membership. If you have bills that you would like included in the weekly bill update, please email jsantoro@gabio.org.

[Legislative Tracking Sheet](#)

GEORGIA BIO POLICY & ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETINGS/CALL SCHEDULE FOR 2019 GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

~~Wed. January 22nd at 11am~~
~~Mon. February 3rd at 11am~~
~~Mon. February 17th at 11am~~
~~Mon. March 2nd at 11am~~
Mon. March 16th at 11am
Mon. March 30th at 11am

If you would like to participate on a Georgia Bio Policy Committee call, please contact Joseph Santoro at jsantoro@gabio.org.

[HB 946](#) sponsored by Rep. David Knight (R - Griffin) is a companion bill to [SB 313](#) sponsored by Senator Dean Burke (R - Bainbridge) aims to bring true transparency to prescription drug pricing in Georgia by mandating PBM report deviations in connection with public pricing benchmarks, prohibiting spread pricing and retroactive recoupments, and requiring rebates to be passed back to payors. The bill passed the House with a 165-1 vote. SB 313 passed the Senate with a 52-0 vote.

[HB 947](#) sponsored by Rep. David Knight (R - Griffin) sets forth some of the many problems in prescription drug administration in Georgia's Medicaid managed care program. The bill aims to address problems with poor outcomes, self-dealing, and high administrative costs by an actuarial study of savings to the state by carving prescription drugs out of Medicaid managed care and having those benefits administered in Georgia's Medicaid fee for service program. The bill passed the House with a 168-0 vote.

Bills of interest that passed out of committee this week include:

- [HB 791](#) - Pharmacists; dispense up to a 90-day supply of a maintenance medication
- [HB 927](#) - Air quality; reporting of any unpermitted release of ethylene oxide to the Environmental Protection Division of the Department
- [HB 991](#) - Healthcare Transparency and Accountability Act
- [SB 391](#) - "Early Prescription Refills During Emergencies Act"; health insurers to provide coverage for early refills of a 30-day supply
- [SB 415](#) - Civil Practice and Litigation Reform
- [SB 426](#) - Air quality; reporting of any unpermitted release of ethylene oxide to the Environmental Protection Division of the Department

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Georgia Bio will provide updates on specific legislation of interest to the Georgia Bio membership. Please see below for legislation that has been added to our legislative tracker this week.

[SB 484 - Health; Solemn Covenant of the States to Award Prizes for Curing Diseases; adopt](#)

Bill Author: Senator Kay Kirkpatrick (R - Marietta)

Bill Status: Senate Referred on March 3, 2020

Summary: SB 484 aims to adopt the Solemn Covenant of the States to Award Prizes for Curing Diseases, to provide entry of the state into a multistate compact to incentivize the development of cures for diseases through substantial financial awards.

[HB 1079 - Social services; Section 1115 waiver request to the federal government with a state plan amendment to authorize Medicaid expansion; replace provisions](#)

Bill Author: Rep. Kim Schofield (D - Atlanta)

Bill Status: House Second Readers on March 3, 2020

Summary: HB 1079 relates to medical assistance and insurance to replace provisions to the submission of a Section 1115 waiver request to the federal government with a state plan to amendment to authorize Medicaid expansion.

[HB 1105 - Patient Protection Through Health Information Exchange Act; enact](#)

Bill Author: Rep. Mark Newton (R - Augusta)

Bill Status: House First Readers March 5, 2020

Summary: HB 1105 relates to health care data collection to require hospitals to participate in a survey disclosing whether such hospitals maintain technology allowing the electronic sharing of certain patient information with other hospitals.

[HB 1128 - Insurance; pharmacy benefits managers; revise provisions relating to rules and regulations](#)

Bill Author: Rep. Sam Park (D - Lawrenceville)

Bill Status: House Hopper March 5, 2020

Summary: HB 1128 relates to regulation and licensure of pharmacy benefits managers to revise provisions relating to rules and regulations, audits, reimbursement requirements, and to require reasonably adequate and accessible pharmacy benefits manager networks.

[Click here to view our 2020 Legislative Tracker](#)