

WVHA

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

January 11, 2023

PEIA Bill Introduced and Adopted by the Senate – Day 1 of the 60 Day Legislative Session

Today is day 1 of the 60 Day legislative session and there's already action related to WVHA's top legislative priority: increasing PEIA inpatient rates for hospitals. Today, the WV Senate introduced and passed [SB 127](#) to increase PEIA inpatient rates to hospitals to 110% of Medicare. The vote was unanimous [33-0](#). There was a clarifying amendment offered by Senator Weld R-Brooke and adopted by the full Senate to allow for the rate increase to be effective July 1, 2023. The Senate moved swiftly today by considering the bill on the Senate floor upon its introduction and then they advanced it to the House of Delegates for further consideration. Numerous Senators on both sides of the aisle spoke in favor of the bill.

It's not yet known what the House will do with [SB 127](#) but to assist the WVHA Legislative Team in promoting and advancing this or a similar bill, we're requesting member hospital CEOs and others involved in our grassroots advocacy efforts to reach out to their local delegates to communicate support. We have attached a set of general talking points and a 1 pager pertaining to *West Virginia Hospitals and PEIA* to use with legislators to communicate the importance of this issue. In addition to these talking points, we ask that you specifically use the following messages to help advocate our position:

1. First, be sure to thank your local district Senator for their swift action on [SB 127](#). It's very important, on this first day of the legislative session, that we express appreciation to the Senate for their strong leadership on PEIA. Contact information is available [here](#).
2. Please communicate that we remain encouraged that policymakers are looking to address the inequities in reimbursement to ensure West Virginia hospitals have the resources necessary to ensure access to care.
3. We look forward to working with policymakers this legislative session and we want to serve as partners with them in resolving this issue.

Recent Media about PEIA

Last week's announcement by Wheeling Hospital that, as of July 1, 2023, it will no longer accept PEIA patients, has generated plenty of buzz in the media and among policymakers at the State Capitol. We've included a few stories in our *WVHA Daily News Scan* since the announcement, and now moving forward we'll be sure to include all media-generated stories involving PEIA. In case you missed some of the media in recent days however, we've captured the stories below for reference. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [me](#).

[West Virginia legislative session to start Wednesday; Justice to deliver State of the State address at 7 | WV News | wnnews.com](#)

[Legislative session revs up with talk of taxes, education, DHHR reform and PEIA funding - WV MetroNews](#)

[PEIA, taxes among items to be taken up during W.Va. Legislature session | WTOV \(wtov9.com\)](#)

[The Super-Duper Majorities in the WV Legislature - WV MetroNews](#)

[Group representing educators pleading for action on PEIA | WTOV \(wtov9.com\)](#)

[West Virginia delegate sends letter to Governor saying the Ohio Valley is being harmed with Wheeling Hospital decision on Public Employees Insurance | WTRF](#)

[Lawmakers, Unions Weigh in on WVU Medicine Wheeling Hospital PEIA Decision | News, Sports, Jobs - The Intelligencer](#)

[Lawmakers look at PEIA, DHHR reform | News, Sports, Jobs - The Intermountain](#)

[PEIA Bombshell - WV MetroNews](#)

[Don't Delay on a Fix for PEIA | News, Sports, Jobs - The Intelligencer](#)

[PEIA, teacher's aides near top of West Virginia legislative agenda | WOWK \(wowktv.com\)](#)

[A Look Ahead: PEIA, DHHR reform on the front burner for West Virginia lawmakers | News, Sports, Jobs - News and Sentinel](#)

2023 WVHA Legislative Agenda/Resources/Hospital Advocacy Week

Along with seeking an increase in hospital payments from **(PEIA)** in line with the cost of providing care; other WVHA top legislative priorities include:

- Providing targeted fiscal relief for physicians through the **Physician Payment Improvement Program**;
- Protecting the Certificate of Need **(CON)** program;
- Advocating for the protection of health care workers through **anti-doxing** legislation to make it a crime to disseminate personal identifying information with the intent to intimidate or threaten;
- Aligning state law enabling Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) to convert to Community Outpatient Medical Centers with new federal guidance allowing for establishment of **Rural Emergency Hospitals**;
- Sustaining the state's current **childhood immunization laws**; and
- Streamlining the **Prior Authorization** process, among other issues.

Many of these and other issues are highlighted in our [2023 WVHA State Legislative Agenda](#) and more details are found on our password protected [Advocacy Page](#). Also, please be on the lookout for further

details regarding our upcoming [Hospital Advocacy Week 2023 activities](#) scheduled for February 6-10, 2023. For more information, please contact [Whitney Cherry](#).

WV Legislature's Website

The West Virginia Legislature's [website](#) is now updated with lawmaker and committee membership information. Key committees that we'll be following, along with their membership and contact information is listed below. To live stream the action throughout the session click [here](#).

- [House Health Committee](#)
- [House Finance Committee](#)
- [House Judiciary Committee](#)
- [House Government Organization](#)
- [Senate Health Committee](#)
- [Senate Finance Committee](#)
- [Senate Judiciary Committee](#)
- [Senate Government Organization](#)

In addition to these major standing committees, we've learned the Senate Finance Committee will be forming 3 Subcommittees this session that will be meeting weekly to perform a deeper dive into specific topics including PEIA. Here's what we've learned so far:

- Senate Finance Subcommittee A – will focus on PEIA. Aside from the Senate's passage of SB 127, the subcommittee will be evaluating PEIA operations and other related structural matters;
- Senate Finance Subcommittee B – will focus on DHHR and its budget including how federal matching dollars are utilized and allocated, along with grants administered by the DHHR;
- Senate Finance Subcommittee C- will focus on economic development and higher education

Governor's State of the State Address

Gov. Jim Justice will deliver his seventh State of the State Address to a joint session of the West Virginia Legislature in the House of Delegates chamber, this evening Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at 7 p.m. Follow the address:

- **Online Livestream:** [YouTube](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)
- **On TV:** The address will be broadcast live on the West Virginia Public Broadcasting Channel. [Find your station here](#) (Use column labeled "WVPB").
- **On Radio:** Audio from the address will be broadcast live on West Virginia Public Radio. [Find your station here](#).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [me](#), [Jim Kaufman](#) or [Brandon Hatfield](#). Thanks.

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