

WVHA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

February 21, 2025

First full week of the Legislative Session concludes

Today is Day 10 of the Legislative Session and more than [1300](#) bills have been introduced in the Legislature. Your continued grassroots effort out in the field enhances our work at the State Capitol so please continue your outreach to legislators on [HB 2007](#), the Governor's CON Repeal bill (see *below*). Also, please check out the [Legislature's website](#) for information about your legislator(s) and their committee assignments along with [streaming and audio](#) of floor sessions and committee meetings. Contact [me](#) with any questions or need assistance connecting to your legislators.

Continued Call to Action on CON in the House

Action involving [HB 2007](#), the Governor's CON Repeal bill, heated up this week with the first round of testimony to members of the [House Health Committee](#). A 5-hour meeting yesterday included testimony by WVHA representatives Candace Miller, CEO, WVU Medicine, Jackson General Hospital and David Goldberg, President & CEO, Mon Health, and Executive VP, Vandalia Health. Both provided excellent testimony and a unified voice on the issue, while also responding to a series of legislator questions. Thank you to Candace and David and the many hospital CEOs, administrators, and staff who came to the Capitol for the hearing and to meet with legislators. It's critically important to continue the face-to-face meetings that we've all been having with lawmakers this week. We're hearing this is one of the most effective strategies in our advocacy.

CALL TO ACTION: A vote on the bill in the House Health Committee is expected Monday at 3:00 p.m. If you would like to come down to the Capitol for this meeting, please let [me](#), [Jim](#) or [Brandon](#) know. We're requesting all member hospitals continue to engage in our support to protect and preserve CON. **Please contact your Delegate immediately and ask them to VOTE NO ON CON REPEAL and HB 2007.** It's important that legislators hear from their local hospital constituents so please encourage your senior management staff to contact legislators. Also, please continue to engage your local governments as well as the business community, particularly since the WV Chamber of Commerce this week has also weighed in with legislators in opposition to HB 2007. Please check our [CON Resource Page](#) for materials and if you have any questions or need to know who your local legislators are, please contact [me](#).

Other speakers during yesterday's meeting included: Dr. Arvin Singh, new Cabinet Secretary, Department of Health who spoke in favor of CON Repeal; and representatives of out of state think tanks advocating for free-marking principles including [The Cicero Institute](#) and [The Institute for Justice](#). Along with the [Cardinal Institute](#), who also presented to the Committee, all of these groups theorized the impact of CON on West Virginia health care while using irrelevant out of state

examples and outdated studies to make the case for Repeal. In contrast, WVHA representatives provided real examples of the investments West Virginia hospitals are making to their communities to expand access to care and to meet the needs of West Virginians. Other presenters included: representatives of Memorial Health System in Marietta, OH and Valley Health who spoke in favor of CON Repeal. Melanie Hall, President of the West Virginia Hospice Council spoke about the impact of CON repeal on the hospice industry. While the archived recording of the meeting is not yet available, you can check back [here](#) after its posted.

The Senate companion bill ([SB 453](#)) has not been acted on and is pending in the Senate Health Committee.

Childhood Immunization bill passes Senate

Today, the Senate passed [SB 460](#) relating to childhood immunization requirements by a vote of [20-12](#). The bill now moves over to the House for further consideration.

The bill would allow religious exemptions to the state's school vaccinations if parents or legal guardians object on legal grounds. To qualify for the exemption, families would submit an annual written statement requesting a religious or philosophical exemption about required vaccines. Under SB 460, families who want a religious exemption would submit a written statement to their school or day care administrator saying that the state vaccine requirements cannot be met because they conflict with the parents' or emancipated child's religious or philosophical beliefs. Medical exemptions to vaccine laws would be submitted by a child's medical provider and they would not be subject to approval by the state's immunization officer, a position that would be terminated if the bill becomes law.

If passed, the bill will move West Virginia from having one of the most effective school and childcare immunization requirements in the nation to having one of the weakest. By allowing easy to obtain religious and philosophical exemptions it will become easier and more convenient for parents/guardians to opt their children out of immunizations than to vaccinate them. This will lead to reductions in immunization rates in West Virginia and put children and communities at risk for the return of vaccine-preventable diseases. A coalition of physicians, nurses and other health care providers are continuing to work through the [West Virginia Immunization Network](#) to advocate against the legislation.

Other Key Bills of Interest

Here's a breakdown of *some* of the other bills introduced in the Legislature that we're following and reviewing. If you have any questions about these or other bills introduced or wish to share any comments, please contact [me](#) or [Brandon Hatfield](#).

- **Medical Records Bills**
 - [SB 286](#) – Granting parents access to health records of minor child – *advanced from Senate Health Committee to Senate Judiciary Committee*

- [SB 164](#) – Clarifying parent and guardian access to minor child’s medical records – *Senate Health Committee*
- [HB 2402](#) - Relating to providing access to medical records – *House Health Committee*
- **Hospital Price Transparency Bills**
- [HB 2173](#) – Requiring a hospital to disclose price and fee information for certain health care services – *House Health Committee*
- [HB 2409](#) - Hospital Price Transparency Act – *House Health Committee*
- **Other Hospital Operations / Health Care Bills**
- [HB 2672](#) – Requiring all hospitals and medical offices to send a notice to all former or current patients when they turn 18, informing them that if they have had any negative or adverse side effects of a procedure that was performed on them as a child to contact the hospital or office to inform them of the issue– *House Health Committee*
- [SB 159](#) - Prohibiting certain medical exams on anesthetized patients – *Senate Health Committee*
- [HB 2631](#) - To require all medical providers to orally explain any and all medical treatments and procedures and all possibilities for potential problems or complications or side effects to patients before proceeding with treatments -*House Health Committee*
- **Licensure Related Bills**
- [HB 2001](#) and [SB 458](#) - Universal Professional and Occupational Licensing Act of 2025 – *House Government Organization Committee / Senate Government Organization Committee*
- [HB 2174](#)– Licensure of Birthing Centers – *House Health Committee*
- [SB 557](#) - Relating to licensing by WV Board of Medicine- *Senate Health Committee*

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [me](#). Thanks.

Tony