

WVIA

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

March 28, 2025

Lawmakers Enter Final Stretch

Today is Day 45 of the 60 Day Regular Session, with “Cross-Over” day fast approaching Wed., April 2 – the 50th Day. That’s the last day for each house to consider bills on 3rd reading passage stage in their house of origin. We expect the remaining days of the session to be challenging for hospitals so please be on the lookout for Updates and Calls to Action. Key highlights from this week are summarized below.

CON Repeal attempted again

In the House of Delegates today, there was a motion to discharge HB 2007 Repeal of CON which would have revived the bill from the House Health Committee defeated earlier this session on a 12-13 vote. After a lengthy procedural debate, the motion to discharge failed 74-16 (see roll call vote). After the discharge motion on CON failed, there was another motion to discharge an unrelated bill before the House recessed. This illustrates the difficult political landscape within the Legislature and between the Governor and legislators.

Bill to end Medicaid Expansion introduced

As we reported yesterday, the House Finance Committee originated **HB 3518** in committee that would terminate Medicaid Expansion population coverage if federal FMAP (Federal Medical Assistance Percentage) funding is reduced. While we continue to have discussions with legislative leadership about the potential consequences of this proposed legislation, we want to emphasize this is a very fluid situation.

Considering the dynamic nature of this issue and the current political climate, we recommend using these prepared remarks with Delegates when discussing the bill's potential consequences and Medicaid's strategic role. These points will help reinforce how important Medicaid is to the entire West Virginia healthcare delivery system. In addition, please stand prepared, if called upon, to mobilize a grassroots effort to protect Medicaid as the Legislature dives deeper into the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026 Budget.

- We acknowledge the need to anticipate potential federal Medicaid budget reductions, and we look forward to working with the Legislature and Governor on solutions to ensure Medicaid remains viable in West Virginia. Today 21% of West Virginia hospitals’ patients are covered by Medicaid.
- There is lots of uncertainty in Washington as various proposals aim to cut Medicaid by enacting changes that would force states like West Virginia to make devastating decisions, directly impacting families and communities. These changes include block grants, per capita caps and efforts to reduce federal matching rates that could jeopardize access to healthcare for our citizens – including the more than 160,000 West Virginians who receive their health care coverage through the Medicaid expansion. However, it is important to note that at this time it is unclear what direction these federal Medicaid discussions will take as the House and Senate have not adopted a similar budget resolution.

- While Medicaid cuts could disproportionately harm children, older adults, and people with disabilities, the impact of cuts would not be limited to just Medicaid enrollees. Reduced funding anywhere in the system stresses the availability of services for everyone. We cannot take cuts and continue to provide access to all the services we provide today. If hospitals are forced to cut services, we can't cut a service only for Medicaid patients. If cuts are made, they impact all patients.
- The last several years have been very challenging for hospitals - we are financially fragile. We have faced skyrocketing costs for labor, supplies, and equipment. Between 2019 and 2022, hospitals have experienced an increase in hospital expense growth of nearly 18%, more than double the cumulative increases in Medicare reimbursement of 7.5% -which reinforces that governmental programs like Medicare and Medicaid payments do not cover the cost of care.
- We know firsthand what Medicaid cuts would do to hospitals, essential services and West Virginia's healthcare industry and the economy as a whole. Medicaid is an important program across all West Virginia hospitals, but especially for West Virginia's rural hospitals that depend on it to keep their doors open.
- Losing rural hospitals would devastate communities across West Virginia, depriving them of access to emergency care, maternity services, mental health treatments, long-term care and other life-saving treatments. It would also eliminate jobs, weaken local economies, and force residents to travel longer distances for healthcare, increasing the risk of delayed or missed treatment.
- Medicaid cuts will not only impact West Virginia hospitals, but the entire delivery system including doctors, nurses, mental health providers, and senior care.
- We understand the need to address the state's budget, but we want to work with policymakers to ensure we balance the needs of the State, Medicaid coverage for more than 500,000 West Virginians, and the health care delivery system.

In other action this week...

- The House voted down SB 460 related to religious exemptions for childhood immunizations. Roll call available [here](#). Thank you for engaging on this issue. If you reached out to a Delegate(s) who supported maintaining West Virginia's effective immunization policies and voted NO, please take a moment to thank them.
- We're managing several bills that are advancing in the Legislature impacting hospitals and health care delivery. Some include:
 - [HB 2409](#) –Cooperative agreements under the Health Care Authority (formerly a bill re: hospital price transparency) –**House Floor**
 - [SB 718](#) - Hospital Price Transparency and Reporting –**Senate Floor**
 - [SB 833](#) - Excluding pharmaceutical medication from prior auth gold card process – **Senate Floor**
 - [HB 2402](#) –Access to a minor's medical record – **Senate Floor**
 - [SB 719](#) - Relating to age minor can consent to medical decisions/services – **House Judiciary**
 - [SB 606](#) –Notification of breast density –**House Health Committee**
 - [HB 3014](#) - Hospital Police Force Liability Protection – **House Floor**
 - [SB 458](#) - Universal Professional and Occupational Licensing Act of 2025 – **House Floor**
 - [SB 526](#) - Pharmacist Prescribing Authority Act – **House Health**
 - [SB 921](#) – Creating WV Medical Services Oversight and Support Act – **Senate Finance**
 - [SB 925](#) – Creating needs-based assessment for EMS – **Senate Floor**
 - [SB 810](#) - Requirements for administration of anesthesia – **Senate Floor**
 - [SB 655](#) – Immunity for mental health providers involved in mental hygiene checks – **House Judiciary**

- [SB 761](#) – Involuntary hospitalization of dependent or spouse experiencing substance use disorder – ***Senate Floor***
- [HB 2349](#) - Long-acting reversible contraception to patients receiving methadone and suboxone at the treatment facility for the methadone and suboxone – ***Senate Health***

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

Tony