

The Public Affairs Pulse

Keeping You on Top of Legislative & Advocacy Issues

Medicaid Expansion Passes in MI

LANSING — On August 27, the Michigan Senate passed Medicaid expansion (HB 4714) with a vote of 20–18. All 12 Senate Democrats and eight Senate Republicans voted in favor of the bill.

Earlier this summer, the House passed HB 4714 but the Senate adjourned for the summer before taking a vote. Governor Snyder, unhappy with the Senate's lack of action, called on the Senate to reconvene. A Committee meeting was held in July and the bill, along with two alternative plans.

All three plans were voted on in the full Senate, but the two alternative plans failed. HB 4714, generally regarded as the most mainstream of the three bills, failed to pass during the first vote taken with Sen. Tom Caspersen (R-Escanaba) surprising everyone by voting no.

The Senate went into caucus and Sen. Caspersen met with the Governor. An amendment was drafted that changed some of the details around the payment of hospital care under the new Medicaid expansion program. A second vote was taken, Sen. Caspersen voted yes, and the bill passed.

An additional vote for immediate effect did not meet the Senate requirements of 26 yes votes to qualify. This would have allowed the bill to take effect now, in time for the January 1, 2014 deadline. Without immediate effect, the bill will not take effect until 90 days after the close of the current session — sometime in March or April of 2014. There are very real consequences for delaying the

implementation of Medicaid expansion. Jim Haveman, Director of the Department of Community Health (DCH), claims that Michigan is losing \$7 million dollars every day that implementation is delayed. Leaders in the Senate have been meeting since the vote to decide how to deal with immediate effect issue.

On September 3, HB 4714 returned to the House for concurrence and passed on a 75–32 vote with no changes. The Governor is expected to sign the bill.

Under the plan Medicaid expansion will result in a nearly 46 percent increase in insured residents in the state. There is a cost-sharing component that will result in a possible seven percent cost-sharing for people on Medicaid after 24 months. The bill is generally in line with federal guidelines and is expected to be satisfactory to the Obama administration in moving forward with the federally facilitated exchange.

PPAM Hosts Students for Choice Leadership Retreat

LANSING — On August 13 and 14, Planned Parenthood Affiliates & Advocates of Michigan (PPAM) hosted its annual Students for Choice Leadership Retreat. This retreat brings together the leaders of pro-choice and reproductive justice student groups from colleges around the state and is a supplemental training to the Students for Choice Conference and Lobby Day held each spring.

This year's retreat was attended by 20 student leaders who were able to participate in two days of intensive activism, advocacy, and

leadership training lead by PPAM staff and interns.

The retreat opened with a legislative update and history of the pro-choice movement, providing attendees with background information for the work that they do.

The students were then trained in “The Art of the One-on-One” — talking to people about reproductive justice issues. This was followed by a canvassing action, where students went out into the Lansing community, knocking on doors and getting signatures for the Decline to Sign campaign. This campaign asks people to pledge not to sign the current signature gathering campaign being run by Right to Life to prevent abortion coverage in the new insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act Marketplace.

This was followed by the Story of Self activity in which the students learn the importance of public narrative and storytelling to activist work.

That evening, during dinner, PPAM staff provided an update and training on the Affordable Care Act and the upcoming implementation of the insurance marketplaces.

The second day of training involved intensive work surrounding the ideas of leadership and running a student group. This included how to handle opposition, how to conduct effective meetings, succession planning and leadership transition skills, as well as annual calendar scheduling and event planning.