

Missouri 2018 End of Session Report

The 2018 Missouri Legislative Session ended on Friday, May 18th. During this year's session, 2,328 bills and resolutions were filed. Of those, a total of 153 passed which doubled the number passed in 2017. Although there was a significant amount of controversy this session because of allegations against the Governor, the House and Senate found a way to work together to accomplish several key priorities. Those priorities included education, health care, transportation, labor, tax, and utility ratemaking. In addition, they passed a \$28.3 billion budget that fully funded the foundation formula for K-12 education and restored funding for higher education after universities agreed to limit tuition hikes to 1% next year.

Here are some of the health and disability policy issues that we followed or advocated for or against this year.

SB 699- Modifies the Ticket to Work Health Assurance Program

The Ticket to Work Health Assurance Program provides medical assistance (including home health assistance) through MO HealthNet for employed disabled persons who meet certain qualifications. SB 699 proposed several changes to improve access to the program, which is currently underutilized due to constraints upon program consideration (low asset limits, spousal income, no opportunity for supplemental coverage alongside employer sponsored insurance). The National MS Society supported this legislation and met with their legislators to share information about the bill at MS State Action Day. SB 699 did not make it to a floor this session. However, the bill's sponsor, Senator Sifton, plans to reintroduce the bill next year.

Disability Home Modification Tax Credit

A disability access tax credit is currently available to Missourians with income tax liability who have made home access modifications to the primary residence of the home where a person with a disability resides. The credit is available for ramps, widening doorways and hallways, hand rails and grab bars, stair lifts, bathroom modifications, door hardware, fire alarms, and moving electrical outlets/switches. A 100% tax credit up to \$2,500 per year is available for those with federal adjusted gross incomes of \$30,000 or less. For taxpayers earning \$30,000 to \$65,000 per year, a credit of 50% of the cost of the modification is available up to \$2,500 per year. This credit cannot be taken for two consecutive years. The credit is set to expire December 2019. Despite our efforts, we were not able to successfully extend the credit this session but will work with legislators to introduce a bill to extend the credit next session.

SB 982- Emergency Room Protections

[This act specifies](#) what defines an ailment and when it is considered an "emergency medical condition" based on the person having sufficiently severe symptoms, regardless of what final diagnosis is given. It helps [protect consumers from unfair Emergency Room \(ER\) bills](#) either because an in-network ER hired an out-of-network doctor to treat you and help limit surprise costs to the consumer. This bill was passed and awaits the Governor's signature.

SB 826 Pharmacy Patients Fair Practices

[This bill specifies co-payments applied by a health carrier for a prescription drug may not exceed the total submitted charges by the network pharmacy.](#) This bill will prevent previous practices of pharmacy benefit management companies (PBMs) from preventing pharmacists (commonly referred to as a 'gag clause') from sharing if the consumer's actual cost of the medication is cheaper than their co-pay and allows the consumer to pay the actual cost instead of their co-payment or co-insurance. It also allows pharmacists to sell a more affordable alternative to the consumer if an alternative is available. So, for example, if your co-pay is \$35 and your medication actual cost is \$20, you could pay the lesser amount charged by the PBM to the pharmacy. This bill was passed and awaits the Governor's signature.

Special Session

The Legislature convened a special session at 6:30 pm, on May 18th, to continue addressing [allegations against Governor Eric Greitens](#). So far, the Special Investigative Committee has released two reports, but we hear that another may be forthcoming. It is possible that Articles of Impeachment may be filed against the Governor. If the House votes for impeachment, the Senate will then be tasked with appointing seven jurists to serve as the panel of judges in his impeachment trial. In addition, if the House votes to impeach the Governor, the Lt. Governor, Mike Parson, would assume the duties of the Governor during his trial before the jurists. The Legislature has not sent the Governor the bills they passed in the final weeks of the legislative session. They must, however, send those bills to the Governor before they adjourn sine die on May 30th. Should the Lt. Governor assume the responsibilities of the Governor, he would be tasked with reviewing legislation to determine if they will be signed into law or vetoed. The deadline for approving or vetoing bills is July 14th.