

Legislative Update
March 3, 2018

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Short Week Following Turnaround Break

Legislators took a short turnaround break and returned to work on Wednesday. The turnaround break literally gives each chamber's clerks time to get all of the bill paperwork "turned around" and sent to the other chamber for consideration.

There's been an interesting convergence of some health care bills and the school finance issue growing at the Capitol. Senate GOP leaders began the year saying they wanted a bill to amend the education article in the Kansas Constitution.

In fact, they have held back any health bill that relates in any way to Medicaid, seeing a real possibility that Medicaid expansion could be amended into such a bill and pass the Senate. The tacit understanding: without their constitutional amendment, no consideration of expansion on the Senate floor. SB 38, a bill to expand Medicaid, is still awaiting full Senate action and it is an exempt bill.

A number of other health-related bills were not exempt and did not survive the turnaround deadline. However, interesting action is occurring on one of those bills...

Tobacco Cessation Stayin' Alive

...SB 316. This bill, as introduced, would have provided tobacco cessation medications and counseling services to KanCare beneficiaries, without limiting the number of attempts. The bill was amended in committee to limit the number of medication attempts to four per year, but to allow unlimited counseling services.

SB 316 was not stricken from the Senate Calendar, as is usually the case for bills not surviving turnaround. Instead, it was referred back to the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee. Technically, though, it was not "blessed" through an exempt committee.

Meanwhile, Senator Vicki Schmidt (R-Topeka), chair of the Senate health committee, introduced legislation identical to SB 316 in the Senate Ways and Means Committee (she is also a member of this committee), keeping the legislation alive for consideration. A bill number has not yet been assigned. It is believed that similar action will be taken to introduce the legislation in the House Appropriations Committee.

This legislation had strong support in the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, including testimony from KAFP, and had no listed opponents. The bill didn't technically survive, but the idea and support did. We will keep members informed of progress.

Family Doctor of the Day

KAFP sponsors the Family Doctor of the Day (FDOD) program during the Kansas legislative session. Licensed physicians, including residents, volunteer to provide mostly-minor health needs to legislators and their staff. The Legislature highly values and appreciates access to these services, especially when so many are away from their hometown primary care physicians.

The following members provided services last week: **Doug Gruenbacher, MD**, Quinter and **Racquel Stucky, DO**, Wichita. Please consider signing up for one of the slots still open in the 2018 session.

Committee Action the Week of March 5-9

Tuesday, Mar 6

1:30 pm, House Health & Human Services, Room 546-S

Hearing on: [HB 2663](#) – *Enacting the KanCare Ombudsman Act*

Thursday, Mar 8

1:30 pm, House Health & Human Services, Room 546-S

Hearing on: [SB 282](#) – *Updating substances included in schedules I, II, and III of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act*