TNA sponsored Scope of Practice Task Force legislation (HB 2088) was considered by the House today, substituted for Senate companion bill (SB 1979), amended and passed with an 89-1 vote. The senate bill will be returned to the Senate for concurrence in the House amendment which removes fiscal note.


House Status -- 04/07/2016 - House passed with amendment 2, which deletes all language after the enacting clause. Creates a 19-member scope of practice task force to make recommendations to the General Assembly for the improvement of the health of Tennessee residents by providing access to quality and cost-effective care. The task force is charged with the following: develop a plan to educate the public and healthcare professionals about the advantages and methods for a transformative healthcare delivery system addressing the need for accessible, equitable, and affordable care provided by the appropriate healthcare professional; make recommendations on the implementation of a plan to allow healthcare providers to work to their full extent including education, training, experience, and certifications; and identify barriers to adoption of best practices and potential public policy options to address barriers such as unnecessary regulation and lack of access to primary care providers. Authorizes the appointment of ex-officio members above and beyond the 19 required members. The task force members will not be compensated or be eligible to receive travel reimbursement for their service on the task force. The task force will only meet while the General Assembly is meeting in session or other state business is being conducted. The task force is to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the 110th General Assembly no later than January 10, 2017, at which time the task force will cease to exist. All appropriate state agencies are required to provide assistance to the task force upon request.

Other bills of interest and legislative action taken this week include the following:


Senate Status -- 04/05/2016 - Senate Finance, Ways & Means Committee recommended with amendment. Sent to Senate Calendar Committee.

Position – Support


Senate Status-- 04/06/2016 - Senate Finance, Ways & Means Committee deferred to 04/12/16.

Position—Watch

SB1574 / HB2153 Reinstatement of licenses from a health-related board. -- Sen. Randy McNally / Rep. John Ragan - - Permits the reinstatement of a license that has expired if an application is made to the appropriate licensing board, the person complies with a required periodic payment plan for any past due renewal fees, and complies with a plan for attaining continuing education. Requires the division to develop a payment plan system for arrearages of renewal fees and continuing education attainment.

House Status -- 04/04/2016 - House substituted and conformed to Senate Bill 21574 and passed.

Position – Watch


House Status -- 04/04/2016 - House substituted and conformed to Senate Bill 2122, passed with amendment 1, which authorizes physicians to prescribe FDA approved drug for testing binge eating disorder.

Position – Watch
Requires the office of vital records to forward death certificates of individuals whose death was caused by an overdose of prescription opiates to the controlled substance database advisory committee for investigation and referral of associated prescribers to appropriate licensing boards for investigation.


Position – Watch

Authorizes the employment of certain medical professionals, including dentists, optometrists, and osteopathic physicians by charitable clinics.

House Status -- 04/04/2016 - House substituted and conformed to Senate Bill 2027 and passed.

Position – Watch

Establishes requirements for the dispensing of opioids and benzodiazepines by physicians and other health care providers. Authorizes the board of pharmacy to promulgate rules relative to the registration of all dispensing health care prescribers who dispense opioids and benzodiazepines. Also authorizes the board to establish a fee for such registration. Authorizes the department of health to randomly inspect clinics where dispensing health care prescribers dispense opioids and benzodiazepines solely for the purpose of determining their compliance with the requirements set out in this bill. Permits a veterinarian in the course of the veterinarian's practice to dispense an opioid or benzodiazepine.


Position – Watch

Authorizes a nurse practitioner or physician assistant who practices in a free or reduced fee clinic to arrange for required chart reviews by a supervising physician in the physician's office or remotely via HIPAA-compliant electronic means instead of at the clinic site.

House Status -- 04/04/2016 - House substituted and conformed to Senate Bill 2122 and passed.

Position – Support

SB2373 / HB2331 Health insurance coverage and providers for telehealth. -- Sen. Mike Bell / Rep. Cameron Sexton --
Eliminates the requirement that a healthcare services provider be at a hospital or other qualified site for the services to be considered telehealth services for insurance purposes. Requires health insurance entities to reimburse healthcare services providers at least the same rate for telehealth services as for in-person encounters. Removes the definition of "qualified site" from relevant section in the code.


Position – Watch

Enacts the "Health Care Empowerment Act"; authorizes direct primary care agreements.

House Status -- 04/04/2016 - House passed with amendments 1 & 2. Amendment 1 Rewrites the bill. Deletes the word "membership" wherever it appears. Replaces the word "provider" with "physician" wherever it appears. Adds language requiring that the primary care agreement contain certain specified disclosures in bold font. Authorizes the contracted fee to be paid on a payment schedule. AMENDMENT 2 changes the effective date to July 1, 2016, instead of July 1, 2017.

Position—Watch

SB2445 / HB2468 Volunteer healthcare services to low-income patients. -- Sen. Kerry Roberts / Rep. Sabi Kumar --
Authorizes a healthcare provider and a government contractor to enter into a contract for the provision of volunteer healthcare services to low-income patients in this state. Specifies terms and conditions of such contracts. Allows a healthcare provider who is required to meet continuing education requirements to receive credit for one hour of continuing education for each hour of volunteer healthcare services provided but specifies that credit cannot exceed eight hours for any applicable period of licensure or certification. Requires the department of health to establish a quality assurance program to monitor the provision of volunteer healthcare services.

Senate Status -- 04/06/2016 - Senate Health & Welfare Committee deferred to summer study.

House Status -- 04/05/2016 - House Civil Justice Committee deferred to Summer Study.

Position – Watch

**House Status** -- 04/06/2016 - House Criminal Justice Committee recommended. Sent to House Government Operations.

**Position** – Support

SB2589 / HB1712 Protocols for responding to people with multiple chemical sensitivity. -- Sen. Mark S. Norris / Rep. Brenda Gilmore – The commissioner of health shall encourage public health organizations, the medical community, the department of education, the department of labor and workforce development, the department of general services, and other relevant stakeholders to examine the asthma prevention protocols posted on the web site of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and related information to assist the medical profession, schools, public venues, workplaces, and other relevant stakeholders. The commissioner shall include on the department of health web site the Internet links to the protocols identified as existing asthma prevention protocols as helpful tools to better assist people affected by environmental illnesses and multiple chemical sensitivities.

**Senate Status** -- 04/04/2016 - Senate deferred to 04/11/16.

**House Status** -- 04/07/2016 - House Calendar & Rules Committee placed on Floor Calendar for 04/11/16.

**Position** – Watch

SJR88 Waiver for implementation of TennCare Opt Out program. -- Sen. Mark Green -- Requests the governor to apply for an appropriate federal waiver in order to implement the TennCare Opt Out program as a small pilot project within the TennCare program.

**House Status** -- 04/06/2016 - House Finance Subcommittee placed behind the budget.

**Position** – Watch

**********

A Special Thank You to the nearly 1000 participants who attended the 2016 TNA Legislative Summit on Wednesday!!!