

WEEKLY SESSION NOTES

SENATE REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE – EDWIN B. ERICKSON, CHAIRMAN

Monday, May 5, 2014

[Senate Bill 1224](#) (Vance) would amend Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to offer pharmaceutical cost saving measures, currently available to veterans in long term care facilities, to veterans residing in assisted living residences or personal care homes. A pharmacy that has a contract with an assisted living facility or personal care home would be permitted to repackage and re-label lower cost drugs received from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs drug benefit program so they may be dispensed in unit doses. The terms “assisted living residence” and “personal care home” would be defined as they are defined in the Public Welfare Code. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Resolution 372](#) (Ward) recognizes the week of May 3 through 11, 2014 as “National Travel and Tourism Week” and May 5, 2014 as “Tourism Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 373](#) (Solobay) recognizes the month of May 2014 as “Lupus Awareness Month” and May 10, 2014 as “Lupus World Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 374](#) (Solobay) designates the week of May 6 through 12, 2014 as “Nurses Week” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 375](#) (Hutchinson) designates May 14, 2014 as “Apraxia Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 376](#) (Farnese) designates the month of May 2014 as “Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 377](#) (Kitchen) designates May 2014 as “Hepatitis Awareness Month” and May 19, 2014 as “Hepatitis Testing Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 378](#) (Vance) designates the month of May 2014 as “Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 379](#) (Vance) designates May 16, 2014 as “Bike to Work Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[House Bill 2019](#) (Pyle) would designate the bridge on S.R. 128 over Buffalo Creek, Freeport Borough, Armstrong County as the Freeport Veterans Bridge. **Passed: 49-0.**

Tuesday, May 6, 2014

[Senate Bill 705](#) (Blake) would amend Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to remove the requirement that district attorneys serve on the Board of Inspectors of the Jail or County Prison in third, fourth, and fifth class counties. The legislation would give the district attorney in a third, fourth, or fifth class county the option of the serving on the board. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Bill 1180](#) (Vance) would create the Achieving Better Care by Monitoring All Prescriptions Program (ABC-MAP) Act to enhance patient care by giving prescribers, dispensers and patients access to a patient's prescriptive history through an electronic data system and to aid regulatory and law enforcement agencies in the detection and prevention of fraud, drug abuse, and the criminal diversion of controlled substances. The legislation would create the ABC-MAP Board in the Department of Health to establish the program. The Board would consist of the Secretaries of Health, Public Welfare, Drug and Alcohol Programs, State, and Aging; the Insurance Commissioner; the Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police; the Attorney General; and the Physician General, if the Secretary of Health is not a physician. The Secretary of Health would serve as the chairperson. The program would have to provide an electronic data system of controlled substances prescribed and dispensed in the Commonwealth; be easily accessible by prescribers, dispensers and patients; provide support for those using the data system; and contain processes for prescribers to refer patients to substance abuse treatment. The program would have to maintain a record of database queries that records the information delineated in the legislation.

The Board would be required to remove from the program all identifying information more than three years old from the date of collection. The information would be destroyed unless a law enforcement agency or a professional licensing or certification agency or board for prescribers or dispensers has submitted a written request to the Department for retention of specific information for cause. The information could be kept for an additional period of one year. The Department could not grant more than two extensions regarding the retention of the same information. The program would have to contain a good cause exception for dispensers and prescribers who are unable to submit the required data electronically and would have to allow for the manual submission of data if the dispenser or prescriber does not have Internet access. Current pharmacy reporting requirements to the Attorney General would expire and would no longer be enforceable upon full implementation of the program.

A dispenser would be required to electronically submit information to the program regarding each controlled substance dispensed no later than 72 hours after dispensing a controlled substance. A prescriber would be required to query the program for each patient the first time a patient is prescribed a controlled substance by the prescriber for the purpose of establishing a base line and a thorough medical record, and if the prescriber believes, or has reason to believe, that a patient may be abusing or diverting drugs. Prescription information submitted to the program would be confidential and not subject to disclosure under the Right-to-Know Law. Only those individuals specifically listed in the bill could access the information in the database for the specific purposes outlined in the bill. The legislation would provide both

criminal and civil penalties for releasing information from the program for purposes other those specified or attempting to obtain information by misrepresentation or fraud. A prescriber or dispenser violating provisions of the act would also be subject to sanctions under the individual's appropriate licensing board.

All civil penalties assessed under the act would be deposited in the General Fund and appropriated to the Department to implement the program. All costs associated with recording and submitting data would be assumed by the submitting dispenser, but a dispenser or prescriber could not be required to pay a fee or tax specifically dedicated to the establishment and operation of the program. The Board could direct the Department to pursue federal funding and grants, both public and private. Within two years of the effective date of the act, and annually thereafter, the Department would be required to submit a report to the General Assembly on the program with the information listed in the bill. The report would also have to be made available on the Department's website. **Passed: 47-2.**

Senate Bill 1225 (Brewster) would designate the McKeesport-Duquesne Bridge off ramp, State Ramp 8086, leading to State Route 148 in the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County as the Officer Frank Miller, Jr., Memorial Ramp. **Passed: 49-0.**

Senate Resolution 380 (Washington) honors Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority by designating May 6, 2014 as "Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Day" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 381 (Dinniman) commemorates the 66th anniversary of the birth of the State of Israel. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 382 (Baker) designates the week of May 18 through 24, 2014 as "Emergency Medical Services Week" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 384 (Solobay) designates the week of May 11 through 17, 2014 as "Hospital Week" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 385 (Solobay) designates the week of May 11 through 17, 2014 as "National Nursing Home Week" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 386 (Folmer) designates May 6, 2014 as "Wishbone Day" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

Senate Resolution 387 (Baker) designates May 21, 2014 as "Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Day" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

House Bill 1164 (Murt) would create the Higher Education Course Scheduling Preference for Veteran Students Act. The legislation would require a Pennsylvania community college, state-related university or member institution of the State System of Higher Education to provide veteran students with preference in course scheduling pursuant to guidelines developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. **Passed: 49-0.**

Executive Session

Nominations to Various Boards and Commissions, and Patricia A. Peifer as Recorder of Deeds, Somerset County. [Confirmed: 49-0.](#)

Wednesday, May 7, 2014

[Senate Bill 31](#) (Fontana) would amend Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to repeal the separate provisions for school employees governing the reporting and substantiation of child abuse. School employees would be required to report any suspected child abuse directly to the Department of Public Welfare like other mandated reporters. In addition, school employees and other mandated reporters making a report would have to notify, immediately thereafter, the person in charge of the institution, school, facility or agency or the designated agent of the person in charge of the reported abuse. Upon notification, the person in charge would have to facilitate the cooperation of the institution, school, facility or agency with the investigation of the report. Any intimidation, retaliation or obstruction of the investigation would be subject to the provisions of Section 4958 (relating to intimidation, retaliation or obstruction in child abuse cases) of the Crimes Code. An additional change would permit an investigating county agency to release certain information to the public concerning a child who died or nearly died as a result of suspected or substantiated child abuse. This information would include the identity of the child, only in the case of a child's fatality; the identity of the agency, if the child was in the custody of a public or private agency; and the identity of the public or private agency under contract with a county agency to provide services to the child and child's family in the child's home prior to the child's death or near fatality and a description of those services. The legislation would take effect on December 31, 2014.

[Concurrence in House Amendments: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 1037](#) (Vogel) would amend the Air Pollution Control Act to instruct the Department of Environmental Protection to initiate the process of amending the state implementation plan for attainment of the national ambient air quality standards within 60 days of the effective date of the legislation. Upon approval by the Environmental Protection Agency of a revision which demonstrates continued compliance with the federal national ambient air quality standards through utilization of commensurate emission reductions, the Environmental Quality Board would be required to promulgate regulations to repeal the provisions of 25 Pa. Code Ch. 126, Subchapter C (relating to gasoline volatility requirements). The repeal of the subchapter would eliminate the statutory requirement for low Reid Vapor Pressure gasoline to be sold solely for the seven counties in the Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley Area. [Concurrence in House Amendments: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Resolution 325](#) (Vulakovich) designates May 7, 2014 as "Pennsylvania Health Care Information Technology Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 383](#) (Hughes) expresses support for the victims of the Nigerian school girls kidnapping. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 388](#) (Alloway) designates May 15 through June 15, 2014 as “Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 389](#) (Dinniman) designates May 20, 2014 as “Medal of Honor Grove Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 390](#) (Browne) recognizes the month of May 2014 as “Melanoma and Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 391](#) (Rafferty) designates the week of June 9 through 13, 2014 as “Juror Appreciation Week” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 392](#) (Stack) designates the month of May 2014 as “SAG-AFTRA Month” in Pennsylvania and recognizes the artistic and economic contributions of SAG-AFTRA members’ work in the news media and the entertainment industry. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 393](#) (Leach) recognizes May 25, 2014 as “National Missing Children’s Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 394](#) (Teplitz) designates May 9, 2014 as “Military Spouse Day” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 395](#) (Solobay) designates the month of May 2014 as “Community Action Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[House Bill 1214](#) (Baker) would designate the bridge located on S.R. 58001, known as Elk Run Road, Gaines Township, Tioga County over the Pine Creek as the SFC William Boyle Memorial Bridge. **Passed: 49-0.**

[House Bill 1431](#) (Grove) would designate:

- The bridge located on State Route 3072, Hanover Road, near its intersection with State Route 3092, Lake Road, in Spring Grove Borough, York County as the Corporal Luke S. Runyan Memorial Bridge;
- The traffic circle located on State Route 116 at Hanover Road and Roth’s Church Road in Spring Grove, York County as the Officer David D. Tome Memorial Bridge;
- The bridge located on State Route 116 in Spring Grove Borough, York County as the Specialist Cameron J. Stambaugh Memorial Bridge;
- The bridge located on State Route 4002 between Intermediate Avenue and Municipal Drive in Dover Borough, York County as the Specialist Zachary R. Clouser Memorial Bridge; and

- The bridge located on State Route 74 between Drawbaugh Avenue and Mill Alley, Dover Borough, York County as the Sergeant Brett E. Walden Memorial Bridge. **Passed: 49-0.**

(2014-033)