

Weekly Update - Health Care Reform (12.3.07)

Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez canceled the Assembly and Senate floor sessions that had previously been rescheduled from the week of November 26th to December 5th and 6th to vote on a health care overhaul. The sessions were planned to occur at the same time the Assembly and Senate Republican caucuses were scheduled to convene in San Diego which caused some reaction from Republicans who would have missed the opportunity to vote on health care reform. The Speaker's office responded saying that the dates scheduled for floor sessions were driven by the Secretary of State's deadline for putting a measure on the November 2008 ballot. There is no word yet as to when health care reform special session hearings will resume. Instead special session is "on call of the chair", requiring Legislative members and staff to be available to return to the Capital within 24 hours should the Speaker call a special session hearing. In the meantime, discussions between the Administration and Legislative leadership are rumored to continue in an attempt to come to some sort of compromise on health care reform language.

CPCA will continue to keep you apprised on any progress related to health care reform. Please feel free to contact Jamila Iris Edwards with any questions: jedwards@cpc.org.

Health Care Reform Update 11/26/2007

Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez previously announced that the Assembly would convene in Special Session following the Thanksgiving holiday to vote on the health care reform proposal being negotiated. There will be no Special Session today, or even this week. Instead, negotiations between leadership will continue until December 5th or 6th when the proposal will be heard. Pending passage through the Assembly ABX 1-1 will then be sent to Senate Committees and voted on accordingly.

There have been some rumors as to why the hearing has been delayed. Several areas of contention remain between the Administration and Legislative leadership, such as the financing mechanism, and details of the employer mandate. It has also been said that Speaker Nunez was unable to get the votes needed to pass ABX 1-1 out of the Assembly and that significant amendments must be taken before members reach consensus.

CPCA is working on a comprehensive analysis of ABX 1-1 and will be sending out to members shortly. If you have any questions regarding Health Care Reform, please contact Jamila Iris Edwards at: jedwards@cpc.org.

Weekly Update – Health Care Reform (11.19.07)

Special Session Update:

Since Governor Schwarzenegger called for a special session on health care reform, there have been two Assembly Health Committee hearings; one on October 31st to hear the Governor's health care reform proposal, AB X 1-2, and the other on November 14th to hear the Nunez/Perata bill, AB X 1-1.

Both hearings lasted between four and five hours, with bill introduction, extensive question and answer sessions with members of the Assembly Health Committee, and stakeholder testimony. The hearing on the Governor's proposal additionally included stakeholder panel discussions on specific portions of the proposal. Discussion in both hearings included a broad range of issues, such as state budget implications, consumer affordability, and how the proposals interact and are impacted by federal law, specifically SCHIP and ERISA.

Because no legislative member has stepped forward and agreed to author the Governor's health care reform proposal, the hearing was an informational hearing only, and no votes were taken. The Nunez/Perata plan, however, passed out of Committee with a 10-5 party-line vote.

CPCA participated on a panel on the public program expansion proposed in the Governor's reform plan, as well as stood to testify in support of AB X 1-1.

CPCA Stance and Efforts:

CPCA has spent significant time analyzing both major reform proposals arriving in general support for both, with only minor concerns remaining. Overall the Governor's proposal, AB X 1-2, contains many stabilizing elements for CCHCs, such as the public program expansion and the assurance of PPS for FQHCs. However, the plan still contains very little to address the issue of affordability relating to the individual mandate, and additionally creates significant concerns with the documentation requirements established in the proposal for children not eligible for Medi-Cal because of their immigration status. For additional detail, please see our analysis and recommendations on the Governor's reform proposal by clicking [here](#).

CPCA is in support of AB X 1-1 (Nunez/Perata) because of the significant public program expansion, and especially for the specific affordability protections which exempts individuals from the requirements of the individual mandate if the total cost of care exceeds 6.5% of income. Only minor areas remain where CPCA seeks clarification from leadership. With regard to the proposed provider rate increase for physicians and physician groups, CPCA is asking for assurance that though the language does not specify, primary care physicians are indeed included. CPCA is also asking for CCHCs to be included in the Transparency Commission in the bill. For additional detail, please see our letter and recommendations on AB X 1-1 by clicking [here](#).

What's Next:

The Assembly is expected to return on November 26th, at which time AB X 1-1 will be amended and considered in the Assembly Appropriations Committee. The Assembly will then vote on the measure, and if passed will move to the Senate. If AB X 1-1 makes it through the senate, the bill will then be placed on the Governor's desk by sometime in early December. Though there is some skepticism of health care reform taking place this year, overall excitement continues to rise.

We will continue to keep our members informed as special session progresses. In the meantime, please contact Jamila Iris Edwards with any questions: jedwards@cpca.org.

Health Care Reform Update: The Governor's Bill and the Status of AB 8

Last week, Governor Schwarzenegger released his health care reform bill, The Health Care Security and Cost Reduction Act. Although the bill is pretty similar to the principals outlined in his January proposal, there are a few differences, including the financing proposals. CPCA is preparing an analysis of the bill, its differences from the January proposal and the potential effect on community clinics and health centers. This analysis will be emailed out this week to members and will be available on our website by Thursday, October 18. For general information on the Governor's bill, visit: <http://gov.ca.gov/index.php?/press-release/7648/>.

Last week, the Governor also, as expected, vetoed AB 8, the health reform bill by Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez and Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata. The Governor felt that AB 8 was a bill that "does not cover all Californians, does not address the key issues to reduce health care costs and places too much of the financial burden on employers." Meanwhile, the Governor's bill will be discussed in the special session of the Legislature. To read the Governor's statement on vetoing AB 8, visit: <http://gov.ca.gov/index.php?/pressrelease/7700/&emc=&m=3716240&v=1028141013&l=2>.

CPCA will continue to provide updates on health care reform for members as they are available. For further questions, please contact Jamila Iris Edwards at jedwards@cpc.org or (916) 440-8170 x.234.