



GAHU

Under the Gold Dome Report

March 26, 2010

The week started with the passage of the massive federal Health Care Reform bill and the subsequent “fix” bill. This legislation was won by the barest of margins and impacts every person in the United States. NAHU has published two papers on this subject, a [Reform Timeline](#) and [Tax Timeline](#). Both of these papers were given to key legislators, the DOI and Governor’s office here in Georgia. We have pledged to help them work through the legislation that these bills will force upon our state.

What happened this week:

Cross-over day was Friday, March 26th. This is the day that each bill must pass from one body of the assembly to the other in order to be passed.

- [House Bill 1268](#) was passed out of the House on cross-over day and was referred by the Senate. This is the ARRA “fix” bill for continuation for terminated employees that are not eligible for COBRA.
- [Senate Bill 310](#) did not cross over.
- [House Bill 1184](#) was passed out of the House on cross-over day after much debate by the proponents of mandates, 108-55. Many heartfelt stories were told in the well about people who suffered and died because they were unable to access mandated benefits. The proponents of this bill successfully argued that this bill would bring competition to the state that would allow people access to affordable health insurance. This is the cross-state lines selling bill. Extra wording was added that would provide that domiciled carriers may offer policies similar to the policies offered by out-of-state carriers – and that Georgia residents arbitrate in Georgia. Senator Judson Hill’s cross state lines bill, [Senate Bill 407](#) also passed the Senate, 29-16, and will now be in the hands of the House. It will be interesting to see which bill is finally the law.

- [House Bill 1291](#) did not make it through the House on cross-over day. This bill provides for claims to be filed with private insurance companies for any inmate in state prison that has private insurance.
- [Senate Bill 50](#) also made it on cross-over day. This bill is about registering rental networks, providing they disclose payers in the network. This bill is very complicated and has caused quite a stir in the committee meeting.
- High Risk Reinsurance Risk Pool - [Senate Bill 453](#) - and the accompanying legislation, [Senate Rule 1225](#) creates the provision for allocation of a percent of the premium taxes to fund the High Risk Reinsurance Pool (above). Sadly, these bills did not make it through cross-over day. Once again, Georgia has failed to establish and fund a High Risk Pool.
- [House Bill 426](#) did not pass out of the committee. This bill provides for very broad and comprehensive coverage for autism.
- [Senate Bill 245](#) did not go any where. This bill provided for coverage for orally administered chemotherapy.
- [Senate Bill 378](#) also did not go any where. This is a bill that provides insurance coverage for non-formulary drugs for a limited supply in certain conditions.

Many hours were spent downtown this week, with many meetings with legislators and other lobbyists.

What's happening next week:

We will continue to work with the legislators and lobbyists in following the bills that made it through cross-over day. We will also work with these same people to work through the job of crafting the Georgia response to the federal legislation.

If you are interested in coming downtown to work with me, please let me know - I would love to have your support!

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Wetherton