



GAHU

Under the Gold Dome Report

April 16, 2010

The first week after the Easter recess saw revenue and budgetary items take first position. The largest controversy surrounded the passage of [HB 307](#), as Senator Preston Smith announced he had lost his position as Judiciary Chair because of his “No” vote on this legislation. Our attention will be focused on the last 4 days of the session, now set for April 20th and 21st and April 27th and April 29th.

What happened this week:

- [SB 316](#) passed out of the House insurance committee on Tuesday and will go for a vote sometime next week. If passed, Georgia will join 27 other states have similar legislation that would allow Medi-gap type policies to be sold to eligible individuals under the age of 65 who qualify for Medicare due to end-stage renal failure or other such diseases.
- [SB 411](#) also passed out of the House insurance committee on Tuesday. The bill would allow wellness or health improvement plans to provide incentives for healthy behavior.
- [SB 161](#) also passed out of the House insurance committee on Tuesday. This bill creates an Autism Study Group that will study the different types of treatments available and will set the stage for legislation in the 2012 legislative session.
- [SB 310](#) also passed out of the House insurance committee on Tuesday. This bill would put pharmacy benefit managers under the regulation of the Department of Insurance. Section 2 of this bill now includes MEWA language that requires \$200,000 of surplus and a \$100,000 security deposit and excess reinsurance requirements.
- The House insurance committee also favorably reported on [SB 481](#) which cleans up the language for surviving spouses to 90 days for conversion of the policies.

- The Senate insurance committee was also busy last week, passing out by consent: [HB 412](#) which regulates network access (originally included in [SB 50](#)), [HB 305](#) regarding group life insurance, and [HB 656](#) regarding self-insurance for religious groups (particularly the Mennonites).
- [HB 1268](#) also passed out of the Senate insurance committee on April 13th. The bill was in danger when it was coupled with a failed bill that would allow emergency prescription drugs. Rep. Tom Knox dropped the contentious prescription drug amendment so that the “ARRA fix” bill could get through the committee.
- [HB 1184](#) also passed out of the Senate committee by a margin of 9-2 and was read for the second time in the Senate. This is the Governor’s cross state lines selling bill.
- [HB 1364](#) also passed out the Senate committee that deals with self-insured worker’s comp plans and the insolvency pool.

What’s happening next week:

- The House insurance committee still has some Senate bills to consider and will hold the meeting on Tuesday, April 20th. Currently, the agenda is to hear [SB 50](#) (the network bill referenced above) and [SB 363](#) which would allow the Student Finance Committee the ability to be included in the state benefit plan.

We will continue to work with the legislators and lobbyists in following the bills that impact our business and consumers. We have also spoken to these same people about working through the job of crafting the Georgia response to the federal legislation.

Thank you for your kind words of support! We must stay engaged and participate in the process of protecting the consumers’ right to choose!

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Wetherton