

FLACP

The Florida Chapter of the American College of Physicians

**Legislative Update
February 21, 2014**

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The final week of pre-session committee meetings was an eventful one.

Hundreds of bills were filed in an attempt to meet the impending March 4 deadline, including the FMA's Managed Care Bill (which is designed to standardize pre-authorizations and ensure that patients have access to the most recent list of network providers), the House version of our Health Care Clinic Bill (which eliminates a loophole that allows some non-physician owned health clinics to avoid inspection), and various Telemedicine drafts.

The most ferocious battle of the week, however, was the consideration of the ARNP Scope of Practice expansion bill in the House Select Committee for Health Care Workforce Innovation. Despite vocal opposition from a series of physician groups, including the FMA and us, the Committee voted 13-2 to allow ARNPs independent practice. Special thanks go to Representatives Gayle Harrell and Elaine Schwartz, both of whom resisted intense political pressure to vote against this bad bill.

This does not mean that unlimited ARNP independent practice is a certainty. Already we are working to defeat this bill in upcoming committees and rallying opposition in the Florida Senate. Thank you to those who contacted their representatives last week, but we will need you to redouble your efforts in the weeks ahead.

While we continue to work behind the scenes on the various Telemedicine bills, consideration of SB 7028 was postponed by the Senate Health Policy Committee on Tuesday. It is scheduled to be debated at the March 5 meeting of the Senate Health Policy Committee, as well as by the Select Committee on Health Workforce Innovation on Monday, March 3. While supporting the use of telemedicine, we are seeking to protect Florida patients by requiring that telemedicine providers be licensed by the State of Florida.

Special thanks go to this week's ACP members who took the time out of their busy schedules to meet with their legislators in Tallahassee. Led by President and ACP

Governor Michael A. Zimmer, MD FACP, the team included Daniel Bendetowicz, MD FACP, Keely Fischbach, MD, and Akhil B. Patel, MD.

The 2014 Legislative season is already in full swing, and we truly appreciate those members that are already fully engaged in our efforts. There will not be a Tallahassee update next week as the Legislature is taking the week off before the official start of Session. It is going to be a busy Session! Thank you.

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