



Senior Advocate FYI

April 14, 2017

Welcome to the latest edition of the Senior Advocate FYI (SA FYI) newsletter. Spring is in the air as many would say. For the Legislature that means conference committee time is in the air. On Friday the Legislature adjourned for its break and will return to work on Tuesday, April 18th.

The Senate passed their Health and Human Services (HHS) omnibus bill on April 3rd. The House took a little longer to pass its version of the bill. Last Friday, the House completed its floor session and passed its version of their HHS omnibus bill. As is usually the case, there are differences between the two bills. When the House and Senate return the week of April 17th, it is most likely that a conference committee will be set to work out the final version of the HHS omnibus bill that will be created.

Health and Human Services Omnibus Budget Bill

The table below outlines major provisions of the House and Senate omnibus bills that impact older adults. The bills include a few provisions from the [Governor’s HHS budget recommendations](#), as well as other ideas from the House and Senate.

Senate (SF800 – 3rd Engrossment)	House (HF945 – 2nd Unofficial Engrossment)
Elderly Waiver Reform. Article 3, multiple sections.	Not included.
Nursing Facility Value Based Reimbursement (NF VBR). Make various technical changes to the NF VBR statutes in response to initial implementation challenges and obstacles. Article 3, multiple sections.	House version contains most Senate items and adds a few additional items that the Senate version does not contain.
Return to Community Expansion. Expands the evidence-based initiatives that reduce MA costs from targeted people in nursing homes to five new groups of people. In addition, establishes a new self-directed caregiver grant program from the savings to provide assistance to family caregivers who help older adults age in place. Article 3, sections 4-5.	Not included.
Not included.	Caregiver Support Services Appropriation. Establishes a yearly appropriation of \$200,000 for caregiver support services to be administered by the Minnesota Board on Aging via the Area Agencies on Aging. Funds allocated to an area agency on aging must be used in a manner consistent with the National Family Support Caregiver Program Article 2, section 7.

Senior Advocates FYI is a periodic update from the
Minnesota Board on Aging.

Senate (SF800 – 3rd Engrossment)	House (HF945 – 2nd Unofficial Engrossment)
Essential Community Supports (ECS). Increases the monthly budget limit from \$400 to \$600 and adds respite care and companion services to the list of ECS services available to consumers via the program. Article 3, section 18.	Not included.
Not included.	Alzheimer’s Disease Working Group. Establishes the Alzheimer’s Disease Working Group to review and update the previous working group report from 2011. Also requires the Minnesota Board on Aging to provide staff and other support for the effort. Article 2, section 61.
Medical Assistance Spenddown Income Standard. Increases the standard from 80 to 81%. Article 4, section 14.	Not included.

Health and Human Services Omnibus Policy Bill

The Senate and House HHS omnibus policy bills are waiting on their respective floors for discussion. The table below summarizes the major provisions in the omnibus policy bills that impact older adults.

Senate (SF1291 – 2nd Engrossment)	House (HF1245 – 1st Engrossment)
Home and Community-Based Services Rule (HCBS Rule). Recommends changes necessary within statute to implement the federally mandated HCBS Rule. Article 5, multiple sections.	Identical language.
Individualized Home Supports. Creates a new HCBS service called individualized home support services (IHS). IHS is a service designed to holistically support a person in their own home and within their community by providing support (e.g. supervision, cuing, and assistance) and training in four broad community living service areas. The community living service areas are (1) community participation, (2) health and safety, and wellness, (3) household management, and (4) adaptive skills. Article 5, multiple sections.	Identical language.

On the federal front, the next item for them is finalizing federal fiscal year (FFY) 2017 funding before the current continuing resolution (CR) expires on April 28. House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) has stated that lawmakers want to pass a bill in time to avoid a government shutdown when funding runs out on April 28. No new developments have occurred on the federal level regarding the FFY18 budget. As developments arise with federal fiscal matters, MBA staff will include information about them within our SA FYI publications.

A subscription to the SA-FYI can be arranged by sending email addresses to Nate Patterson at nathaniel.j.patterson@state.mn.us. You may also contact Nate to be removed from this mailing list. Thank you for your ongoing interest in policy and legislative issues that affect older Minnesotans.