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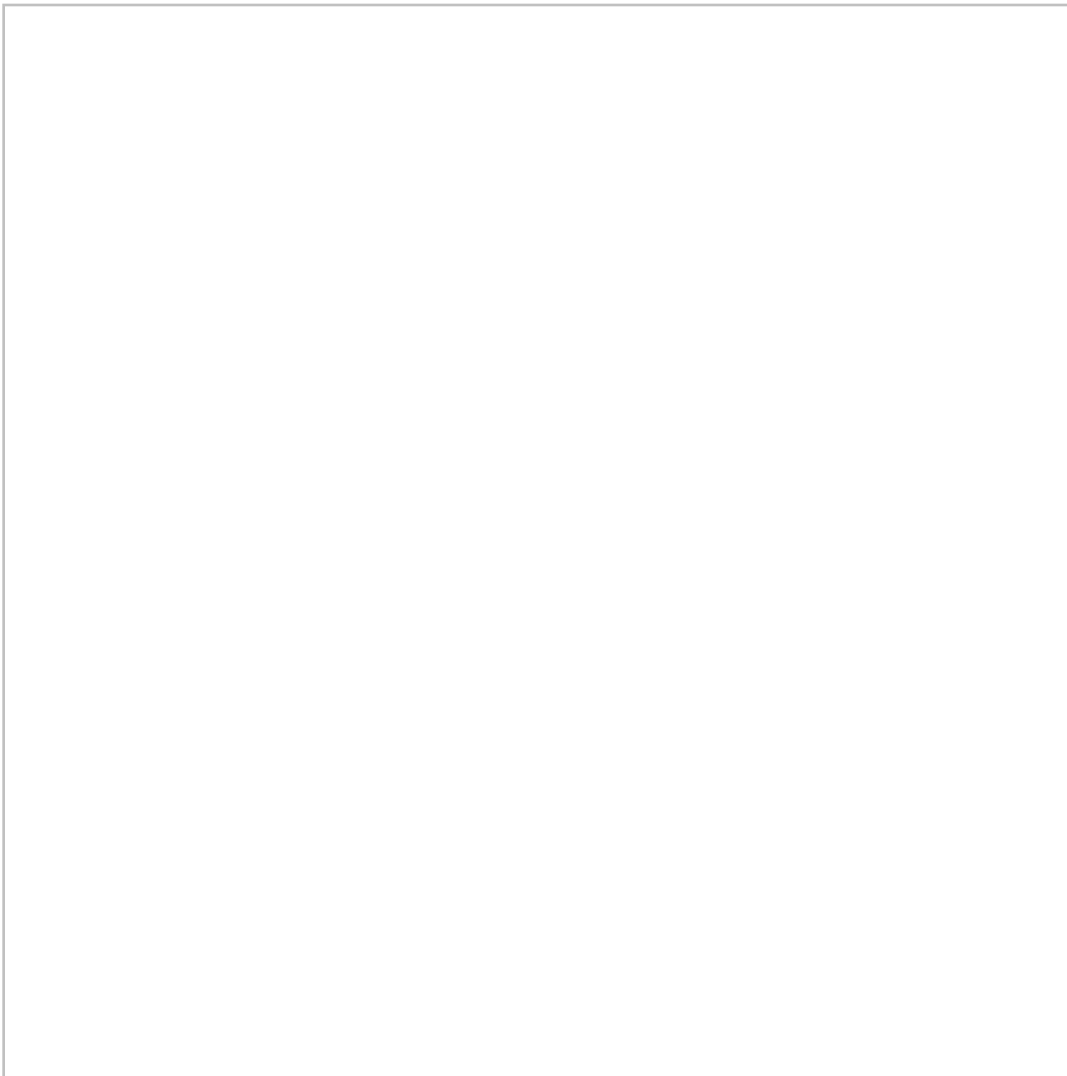
Hospitals push priorities through second funnel deadline

This week marks the Legislature's second funnel deadline for the 2021 legislative session. The funnel dates are self-imposed deadlines the Legislature uses to ensure the session stays on track to end around the scheduled timeframe. For legislation to continue after the second funnel, bills have to pass out of a committee in the opposite chamber they were originally introduced. Hospitals have several wins following this year's second funnel and some opportunities to still push priorities before legislators adjourn for the final time.

More information about these issues is detailed below. In summary, hospitals have been successful with promoting telehealth, public hospital trustee elections, behavioral health, health care workforce and medical malpractice reform, while maintaining the certificate-of-need process. Issues such as emergency medical services and fiscal relief/Medicaid remain opportunities for hospitals to advocate for before the session ends.

Click [here](#) for a video rundown from IHA's lobbyists of legislative session's second funnel.





Telehealth advances thanks to quick thinking in the House

IHA, hospitals and mental health advocates have been hard at work this week to advance [House File 294](#) – a bill to provide reimbursement parity for mental health. The Senate refused to advance the telehealth bill, but the House found a way to keep telehealth alive.

In a strategic move yesterday, the House Human Resources Committee attached House File 294 as an amendment to [Senate File 524](#) – a bill to create a study committee to review bed tracking in Iowa. The committee then passed SF 524 as amended. IHA thanks Rep. Joel Fry for introducing this amendment and the House for continuing to emphasize the importance of telehealth.

SF 524, with the language that includes telehealth payment parity, will now go to the floor for debate before bouncing back to the Senate for further consideration.

Advocacy to keep this issue alive will need to continue in the Senate. Please continue to reach out to your legislators on this issue.

Uncertainty surrounds emergency medical services

[House File 562](#) would ease the process required to declare emergency medical services an essential service and levy tax funds for support. This legislation would remove the lengthy petition

process and the sunset provision that requires a vote every five years to retain funding. HF 562 did not survive past the second funnel, but the bill's language could be revived.

The bill had been assigned to the State Government Committee when it came to the Senate. This legislation could be reassigned to the Senate Ways and Means Committee, which would make it funnel-proof. The language also could appear as an amendment in another piece of legislation, or a new bill could be introduced in a ways and means committee. IHA will continue to advocate for easing the process to declare EMS an essential service and will provide updates as they develop.

Tort reform makes the list

[House File 592](#), which caps noneconomic damages in medical malpractice cases to \$1 million dollars, is still on the House debate calendar but has yet to be debated. Please continue to reach out to your representatives and voice your support for this bill. We appreciate all of your grassroots efforts.

Medicaid bills see mixed results

[Senate File 462](#), Medicaid reimbursements for days awaiting placement, advanced through the second funnel. The bill, which would create a study for reimbursement for days awaiting placement,, moved through the House Human Resources Committee with an amendment. The amendment would limit the study to just inpatient psychiatric reimbursement. IHA continues to work with the Department of Human Services and Iowa Medicaid Enterprise to review this issue.

[House File 736](#) did not meet such a positive ending. The bill would have limited the ability of managed-care organizations to recoup overpayments when the overpayments occurred more than 24 months ago. This bill did not pass out of a Senate committee and will not advance.

Public hospital trustee elections advances

Public hospital trustee elections legislation, [Senate File 568](#), has advanced through a House subcommittee and committee this week, ensuring its survival past the second funnel. Among the provisions in the bill, SF 568 permanently returns the deadline for public hospital trustee candidates to submit their candidacy papers to 69 days before the election. This change is needed because of legislation in 2019 that moved the deadline to the spring before the general election. Last session, IHA successfully advocated for a temporary fix, returning the deadline to early fall and is supportive of this legislation that makes the change permanent. SF 568 is now eligible for floor debate in the House.



Mental health funding in sight

[Senate File 587](#), which provides tax changes including a shift in mental health funding, moved out of Senate appropriations and passed out of the second funnel. It is now on the unfinished-business calendar. Republicans say the bill will shift \$60 million in funding from county property taxes in the first year and \$125 million in later years. In addition, the bill creates a government risk pool to supplement funding to the different regions. IHA is waiting to see a fiscal note on this bill and will continue to keep you updated.

Workforce is on the move

Last week, the governor signed [Senate File 129](#) (Rural Primary Care Loan Repayment Program) into law. This adds OB-GYN to be eligible for loan repayment under the program and strikes the requirement that exceptional circumstances apply before a participant in the program can have a loan repaid for a part-time practice over an extended period.

[House File 852](#) (Tort for Graduate Medical Residents) made it out of funnel this week. This bill includes all graduate medical residents working at public or private hospitals as state employees under the State Medical Tort Claims Act.

On the last day of funnel week, Senate Education also moved [House File 468](#) (Dental and Medical

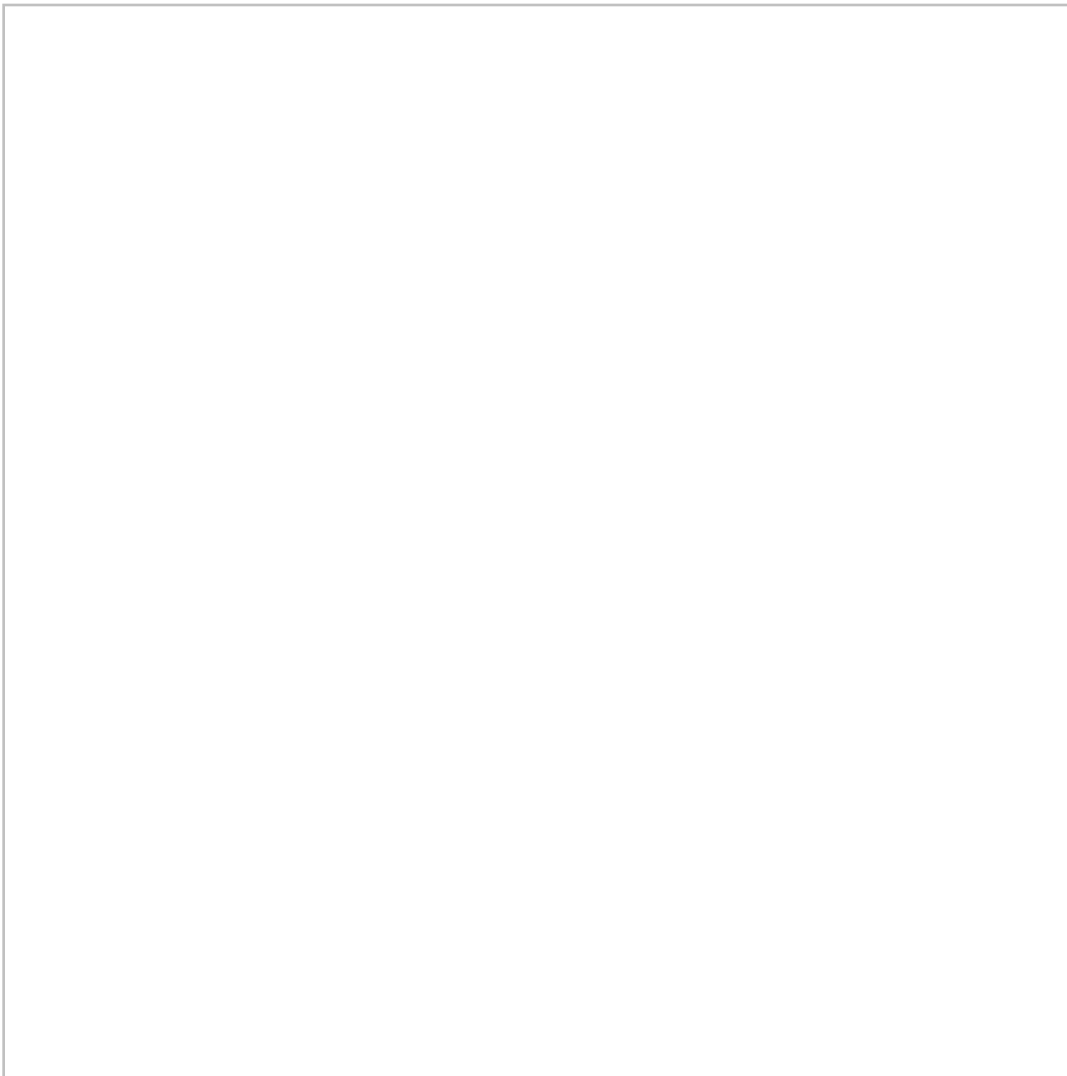
Admissions) forward after adding provisions similar to HF 487 (Medical Residency Interviews). The House approved both bills earlier in the session. HF 468 requires the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine and the dental school to hold 75% of admission slots open for Iowans, or for students who attended an Iowa college. Sen. Herman Quirnbach said the bill could lead to a loss of \$1 million in out-of-state tuition. Sen. Quirnbach also said the key to keeping physicians in state is to offer more medical residencies in the state and the loss in tuition funding could lead to fewer residencies at the University of Iowa. HF 487 requires the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics to offer medical students with Iowa ties residency interviews. We will keep you posted as these two bills move forward.

Rural emergency hospitals definition pushed

As the 2021 legislative session draws to a close, IHA has begun advocating for the inclusion of a hospital priority in this year's standing bill. The standing bill is a "kitchen sink" bill that can include a range of issues. It's the final piece of legislation passed.

IHA is encouraging the inclusion of the definition of a rural emergency hospital because of recently passed federal legislation. In December 2020, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021. Sen. Chuck Grassley was instrumental in getting a hospital-supported provision about the rural emergency hospitals program included in the bill. For hospitals to apply to participate in the program, Iowa would need to adopt a definition for this new hospital category, allowing for state licensure and for the Department of Inspections and Appeals to implement regulations for these types of hospitals. IHA will continue to educate legislators about this provision and will provide updates as they develop.

Summary of dead and alive bills following second funnel



Legislative forums scheduled

Meeting with legislators while they're in their home districts is a great way to advocate for issues you care about. Check the list below of legislative events occurring over the next few weeks. Some of these events are virtual and others are in person.

Saturday, April 3

- 8-9 am, Legislative Coffee with Sen. Jake Chapman and Rep. Ray Sorensen, [Guthrie Center Farm Bureau](#), Guthrie Center.
- 9-10 am, Legislative Coffee with Sen. Dawn Driscoll and Rep. David Maxwell, [Virtual Registration Link](#).
- 10-11 am, Legislative Coffee with Sen. Chapman and Rep. Sorensen, [The Corner Coffee Shop](#), Greenfield.

Monday, April 5

- 8-10:30 am, Marti's Morning Coffee with Rep. Marti Andersen, [Grounds for Celebration](#), Des Moines.

Friday, April 9

- 4:30-6:30 pm, Cedar Valley Legislative Forum with area legislators, [Virtual Link](#).

Saturday, April 10

- 9-10:30 am, Creston Legislative Coffee with legislators from Union, Cass and Adams counties, [Virtual Link](#).
- 9-10 am, Altoona Coffee Chat with Reps. Zach Nunn and Brian Lohse, [Virtual Link](#).
- 10-11 am, Carroll Legislative Forum with Sen. Craig Williams and Rep. Brian Best, [Virtual Link](#).

Monday, April 12

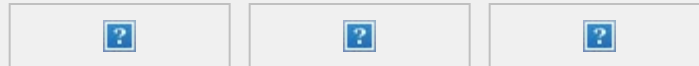
- 8-10:30 am, Marti's Morning Coffee with Rep. Anderson, [Grounds for Celebration](#), Des Moines.

How to stay in the know

Throughout legislative session, the Iowa Hospital Association has developed several ways to keep you informed. Stay tuned throughout session for weekly editions of Legislative Bulletin, biweekly Capitol Update, IHA's Facebook page, Twitter account and LinkedIn account (web addresses are below). IHA also will mobilize hospital advocates through action alerts when legislators need to hear about hospital issues. **Advocates can sign up for email or text message IHA action alerts at <https://www.ihaonline.org/advocacy/iha-hospital-action-network/>.**

Links to bookmark:

- [IHA's bill tracker](#)
- [Facebook page](#)
- [Twitter account](#)
- [LinkedIn account](#)
- [Legislator contact information](#)



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