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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 22, 2021
SUBJECT: Weekly Update

We will begin our second interim committee week on Monday. Multiple committees are having implementation updates from past major initiatives, and there are multiple bills on committee agendas.

At this time, 609 bills have been filed. Included below are those bills where we are actively engaged and those we are monitoring on your behalf. Please review and notify us if you have questions, or if there are other issues you would like us to add to the tracking. The full text of each bill is available on the legislative web sites (www.flsenate.gov and www.myfloridahouse.com.)

COVID Update:

By the Numbers:

Virus Update as of 1/21/21

Total numbers of cases since the pandemic started: 1,613,884

Deaths of Florida Residents: 24,739

Percentage of available hospital beds statewide. 19.01%

Percentage of available adult intensive-care unit beds statewide. 16.27 %

Vaccine Update as of 1/20/21

First dose: 1,183,012

Series Completed: 123,971

Overdue for 2nd dose: this will be removed from future reports . Per DOH: “This number is being removed as it may cause confusion related to the following CDC guidance,” Mahon said. “Based on this guidance, no one is overdue for their second dose, but rather, will be eligible for their second dose.”

State Action:

- As previously noted, the Governor’s executive order prioritizing seniors age 65+, and those healthcare providers with direct patient contact are the absolute priorities for vaccine distribution. While there are inconsistencies between the counties on allocations and the supply does not cover the demand, our caregivers fall within the four corners of the executive orders and are eligible for the vaccine. Care workers should contact their County Health departments, hospitals or community partners to schedule timing for appointments. As vaccines are available in the community, partners will go back through the lists and schedule those appointments.
 - Deputy Secretary Roberson in the Senate Health Policy Committee specifically addressed home care workers on Wednesday as members of the health care provider community eligible in this first 1a grouping.
 - For a comprehensive list of DOH vaccine information please visit:
 - <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/covid-19-vaccines-in-florida/>
 - If issues getting vaccinated please email: Provider.covid19@flhealth.gov
- State health officials on Thursday restricted COVID vaccines to state residents following complaints that non-residents were coming to the state to try to be vaccinated. State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees issued a public health advisory restricting vaccinations to people who can prove Florida residency, with an exception for visiting healthcare workers who have contact with patient
- Governor Ron DeSantis announced the expansion of the state’s partnership with Publix to establish COVID-19 vaccination sites at an additional 137 Publix locations. The Governor announced the expansion of this partnership at Publix Super Markets in Jupiter, Cape Coral and Rockledge. New vaccination sites will be established at Publix pharmacies throughout six counties:
 - 67 in Palm Beach County;
 - 32 in Lee County;
 - 22 in Brevard County;
 - 7 in Charlotte County;
 - 7 in Martin County; and
 - 2 in Monroe County.

These vaccination sites are in addition to the 105 Publix locations announced in the past two weeks, for a total of 242 Publix locations in 18 counties

- Governor Ron DeSantis announced that Florida received \$85.8 million in CARES Act funding to address housing instability and homelessness across the state. The funds, which are being released in two separate disbursements (\$20 million and \$65 million), will be used to provide rental assistance, support emergency shelters, and conduct street outreach programs to connect unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness with local housing and other essential services.

Interim Committee Meetings:

Monday 1/25/21

- S Judiciary 2:30-5:00 pm
 - <https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/JU/ExpandedAgenda/4976>
 - SB 72 Civil Liability for Damages Related to Covid

Tuesday 1/26/21

Wednesday 1/27/21

- S Health Policy 9:00-11:30 am
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/HP/ExpandedAgenda/4990>
- H Professions & Public Health Subcommittee
<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12716&SessionId=90&Committeed=3093>
 - Introduction of Dr. Scott Rivkees, State Surgeon General, Florida Department of Health
 - Implementation briefing by Cassandra Pasley, Director of Medical Quality Assurance, Florida Department of Health on:
 - HB 1061 (2016) Nurse Licensure Compact
 - HB 607 (2020) Autonomous Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN)
 - HB 389 (2020) Practice of Pharmacy
 - HB 23 (2019) Telehealth
 - Autonomous Advanced Nursing Practice - Vicky Stone-Gale, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC
- H Healthcare Appropriations Subcommittee 12:00 pm -1:00pm
<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12709&SessionId=90&Committeed=3088>
- S Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/AHS/ExpandedAgenda/4983>
- H Finance & Facilities Subcommittee 2:00-3:00 pm
<https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Committees/meetingnotice.aspx?MeetingId=12714&SessionId=90&Committeed=3090>
 - Implementation briefing on
 - HB 1175 (2016) Transparency in Healthcare
 - HB 319 (2019) Patient Safety & Quality Measures
 - HB 763 (2020) Patient Safety Culture Surveys
 - HB 21 Certificate of Need Repeal

Legislation: Active Participation:

Legislation to Monitor:

- HB 007 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19 (McClure)
 - Passed favorably in the Civil Justice and Property Rights Subcommittee with amendments 11 -6, bill now in the Pandemics and Public Emergencies committee

Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19: Provides requirements for civil action based on COVID-19-related claim; provides that plaintiff has burden of proof in such action; provides statute of limitations; provides retroactive applicability. Effective Date: upon becoming a law
- HB 9 Protecting Consumers Against Fraud During a Pandemic (Zika)

Prohibits dissemination of false or misleading vaccine information with a specified intent; provides authority and criminal penalties, authorizes civil remedies. Effective Date: upon coming law

 - Passed favorably 16-0 in the Pandemics and Public Emergencies Committee
- SB 0072 Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID (Brandes)

Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19; Providing requirements for a civil action based on a COVID-19-related claim; providing that the plaintiff has the burden of proof in such action; providing a statute of limitations; providing severability; providing retroactive applicability, etc. Effective Date: This act shall take effect upon becoming a law and shall apply retroactively. However, the provisions of this act shall not apply in a civil action against a particularly named defendant, which is commenced before the effective date of this act

- Up in S Judiciary on 1/125/21
- SB 700 Telehealth (Rodriguez, A)
Requiring AHCA to reimburse the use of telehealth in certain limitation; revising the term telehealth; authorizing nonphysician health care 15 practitioners to satisfy a certain supervision 16 requirement through telehealth; authorizing out-of-17 state physician telehealth providers to engage in 18 formal supervisory relationships with certain 19 nonphysician health care practitioners in this state; revising the 23 definition of the term “pharmacy”; authorizing registered 26 pharmacy technicians to compound and dispense 27 medicinal drugs under certain circumstances

Other Legislative issues of Note:

2 issues that will be discussed next week outside of your policy area of interest that may attract news:

- **H Criminal Justice & Public Safety Subcommittee will hear the Combating Public Disorder Bill**
This will likely get significant news coverage as it is in response to both the protests over the summer as well as the events at our Nation’s Capitol earlier this month.
- **Public Integrity issues:** With Committees meeting to discuss state partners and misuse of funds, these issues will continue to gain traction, particularly where the legislature is looking to make cuts – expect substantive and budgetary language to incorporate “lessons learned”.
 - H Public Integrity & Elections Committee will overview the ongoing investigations of Research Institutions, the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the VISIT Florida LLC contracts (Emeril’s Florida). These were investigations started in years prior, related to misuse of state funds and beyond.
 - H State Affairs will also be discussing not-for-profit and quasi-public entities that receive state funds.