

Date: November 13, 2011  
To: Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition Members and Interested Parties  
From: Kathy Chan, Associate Director/Director of Policy and Advocacy  
Re: Summary of 2011 Fall Veto Session

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## **Budget**

The Illinois General Assembly concluded their 2011 Fall Veto Session on November 10. However, the House will reconvene on November 29 for a special session to discuss several issues that are still pending.

One of these issues is a set of massive tax breaks demanded by the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) and Sears, which have threatened to leave Illinois if a deal can't be made. The tax breaks would cost around \$20 million in the first few years as a result of money saved by decoupling from the federal tax code; however, in subsequent years, these tax breaks would cost the state hundreds of millions of dollars each year.

While IMCHC is not actively working this legislation, we certainly oppose this move by the Illinois General Assembly's to provide tax breaks for multi-million dollar corporations while cuts to human services and delayed payments to providers continue to occur. The House is expected to vote on this legislation when they return on November 29.

Legislative leaders are also working on a supplemental budget to fill the funding gaps for mental health, homeless services, and substance abuse treatment, totally around \$290 million. Action on this is expected in January 2012.

## **Senate Bills**

**SB1313, HA2 or HA4** (Sen. Schoenburg/Rep. Mautino): Establishes the Illinois Health Benefits Exchange; outlines the governing board, conflict of interest provisions, and financing options. Awaits next action by the House Insurance Committee.

Negotiations are ongoing between advocates, insurance, brokers, and the state chamber of commerce. IMCHC and other advocates are actively working to ensure that the Exchange board includes representation of consumer and small businesses and prohibits the participation of active insurers and brokers who could profit from their decisions.

Additionally, IMCHC and others are advocating for an "active purchaser" Exchange, which gives the Exchange additional power to set standards for insurance companies that wish to sell their produce on the Exchange.

HA2 is the only amendment that has been assigned to the Insurance Committee. IMCHC and other health advocates are working with the house sponsor to ensure that our viewpoints are incorporated into a final bill. The bipartisan co-chairs of the study committee are expected to come together and continue to work through recommendation towards establishing an Exchange. It is unlikely that action on this issue will take place before January 2012.

**SB2502** (Sen. Hunter/Rep. Harris): Increases the Medicaid reimbursement rate for screening and diagnostic mammography services to Medicare rates for providers submitting quality information to the Metropolitan Chicago Breast Cancer Task Force. Passed Senate unanimously; awaits action in the House.

## House Bills

**HB1958** (Rep. Gabel/Sen. Hutchinson): Extends the protection against restraints of incarcerated pregnant women through their pregnancy, instead of just the period of labor. The bill also clarifies that the officers may not be in the delivery room, but may be posted outside except for periodic security checks or at the request of medical staff. Allows for therapeutic restraints to be used when deemed medically necessary. This bill is only applicable to Cook County. Awaits action (on 3<sup>rd</sup> reading) in the Senate.

**HB3027** (Rep. Lilly/Sen. Steans): Requires public schools that offer sex ed to grades 6-12 to teach comprehensive, age-appropriate, medically-accurate curriculums that are evidence-based. Awaits concurrence vote in the House.

Coalition partners are still working this issue with House members. Please continue to contact your representatives urging them to support comprehensive sex ed.

### Additional issues:

**Gaming Expansion** – The General Assembly passed legislation in the spring session that would have granted five new casino licenses in Illinois, including one within Chicago city limits. The bill would have also allowed for slot machines at racetracks and at Midway and O’Hare airports. The bill was never sent to the Governor’s desk because he threatened to veto it.

The House attempted to pass a new, scaled-back gaming bill during the Fall Veto session. However, this bill only received 58 votes and was put on postponed consideration. There is talk that the Senate may try to pass their own bill.

**Pension Reform** – Two separate bills were passed (HB3813 and HB3815) that close loopholes for public pensions. A third bill that sets up a three-tiered pension system is pending action in the Senate.

The 2012 House session calendar is now posted online at <http://www.ilga.gov/house/schedules/default.asp>.