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## Legislative Update | February 19, 2024

### Legislature

The legislature returned to session on Monday. This is a short session and a non-budget year with a constitutional deadline of May 20th. In addition, there are legislative breaks for Easter, Eid, and Passover in addition to one for precinct caucuses during this election year. This means there is limited time for bills to make it through the committee process.

The DFL continues to have trifecta control with a one-vote majority in the Senate and a three-vote majority in the House and of course, Governor Walz.

All bills from last session continue to be in play this session along with new bills introduced this year. Almost 1000 bills were introduced in just the first four days of session.

The Governor and the Speaker in particular are setting expectations for a more limited agenda focused on bonding bill and some clean up bills. In addition, Senator Rest, who chairs the Senate Tax Committee has indicated that she is not interested in passing any further tax increases.

### Leadership Change

There is a new Senate Majority Leader, Erin Murphy, as sadly Sen. Kari Dziedzic stepped down due to the reoccurrence of her cancer. Murphy is from the more progressive side of the Senate caucus.

### Budget

Net general fund revenues in January were \$313 million more than forecast. Net receipts from all major tax types were above the forecast. For fiscal year 2024, year-to-date receipts are now \$384 million (2.3%) more than forecast.

The February forecast will be released on February 28th and will form the basis of any possible spending bills.

### Bill Introductions

**DI Mental Health Mandate** – this was introduced in both House and Senate (see links below). Member Corey Anderson and I had a call with the representative from the carriers about strategies for opposition. Only one other state mandates coverage for mental health on disability policies and they are now down to just two carriers who write the coverage.

### **Kraft, Feist, Howard, Acomb, Pérez-Vega, Bierman, Elkins, Hicks and Finke introduced:**

**H. F. 3836**, A bill for an act relating to insurance; requiring disability income coverage to apply the same standards and provide the same benefits for disability due to mental illness and substance use disorders as for other medical disabilities; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 60A.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Commerce Finance and Policy.

## **Senator Xiong introduced--**

**S.F. No. 3606:** A bill for an act relating to insurance; requiring disability income coverage to apply the same standards and provide the same benefits for disability due to mental illness and substance use disorders as for other medical disabilities; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 60A.

Referred to the Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection.

## **Health Insurance Mandates**

There are bills too numerous to list here, but it has become a perennial process of adopting additional benefit mandates that incrementally add to the cost of coverage.

## **Insurance Day**

Mark your calendars for Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup> for Insurance Day at the Capitol. It is the abbreviated version this year and starts at 11:30. It is well worth your time to start to develop relationship with your legislators for those times when you will need their ear on a bill that impacts your business.

## **Election News**

Rep. Frank Hornstein (DFL-Minneapolis) announced today that he will not seek re-election. First elected in 2002, Rep. Hornstein is currently the Chair of the House Transportation Committee.

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