



Senate Approves Corrections Package

Bill Addresses Inmate Healthcare and Substance Use Services

The Senate debated corrections legislation on the floor this week and added numerous amendments. SB 212, sponsored by Senator Bill White (R-Joplin), started as clean up language for the Department of Corrections and Division of Probation and Parole. The bill now includes numerous provisions on health and substance use services for offenders.

Senator Justin Brown (R-Rolla) added an amendment to allow proceeds from the Inmate Canteen Fund to be used for reentry services, in addition to recreational, educational, or religious services for offenders. The amendment also requires Department of Corrections facilities and local jails to ensure adequate feminine hygiene products are available to offenders at no cost. The bill directs the General Assembly to appropriate funds to help jails cover these expenses.

Language was included from Senator Rick Brattin (R-Harrisonville) to require a fifty-cent co-pay for offenders receiving non-emergency healthcare. Inmates will not be assessed the co-pay if they are determined unable to pay. Certain types of services would be exempt, including prenatal care and substance use treatment.

An expansion of medication assisted treatment (MAT) is also now part of SB 212. This language is championed by Senator Steve Roberts (D-St. Louis). Subject to appropriations, prisons and jails would be required to assess detained or incarcerated individuals for substance use disorders. Entities would also have to make MAT available to offenders in need of such services.

SB 212 requires a floor vote before it can advance to the House for consideration.

Dates of Interest

January

- **6** - First Day of Session
- **18** - No Session, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **27** - State of the State Address

March

- **1** - Bill Filing Deadline

House Advances Equal Parenting Bill

The House passed HB 299, sponsored by Representative Wayne Wallingford (R-Cape Girardeau), which creates a rebuttable presumption for child custody arrangements that equal parenting time is in the best interests of the child. The legislation passed the House 133 to 18.

The sponsor said this change is needed to provide clarity that equal parenting time should be the starting point when awarding custody. This can be rebutted by numerous factors, such as the child's wishes, relationships, and

- **12** - Legislative Spring Break Begins
- **22** - Legislature Reconvenes

April

- **5** - No Session, Easter Break

May

- **7** - Budget Bills Must be Passed
- **14** - Last Day of Session

schooling. Equal parenting time can also be rebutted if one of the parents has abused or neglected the child or if the court finds a pattern of domestic violence.

In previous years, domestic violence advocates have opposed shared parenting legislation due to concerns that it would make it easier for abusers to maintain child custody. Compromise language to protect domestic violence survivors was added into this year's language, and there was no opposition in committee to HB 299.

The Senate version of this legislation, SB 459, sponsored by Senator Rick Brattin (R-Harrisonville), has passed committee and is on the Senate calendar for floor debate.

News in Brief

- The House Emerging Issues Committee is scheduled to hear legislation to provide clear legal authority for syringe access programs to operate in the state. SB 64, sponsored by Senator Holly Rehder (R-Scott City), passed the Senate 30 to 4. Syringe access programs are an evidence-based tool to reduce the spread of disease through contaminated needles and increase the likelihood of individuals entering substance use treatment.
- Mental health parity legislation will be heard in the House Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy this week. HB 889, sponsored by Representative Patty Lewis (D-Kansas City), prohibits insurance carriers from imposing stricter standards for mental health treatment than for medical services.
- A House Rules Committee passed a resolution that, upon voter approval, would require all public school sports teams to be designated for males, females, or co-ed. HJR 53, sponsored by Representative Chuck Basye (R-Rocheport), would prohibit transgender students from participating in sports teams designated for females. This bill now awaits placement on the calendar for House floor debate.
- The Senate Professional Registration Committee will hear legislation prohibiting the Division of Professional Registration from requiring a barber or cosmetology license for individuals who solely practice shampooing under the direction of a licensed barber or cosmetologist. HB 273 is sponsored by Representative Tom Hannegan (R-St. Charles).
- Legislation creating Child Development Accounts is scheduled for a hearing this week in the Senate Education Committee. HB 627, sponsored by Representative Jon Patterson (R-Lees Summit), would seed initial accounts for children born in Missouri that could be used for post-secondary expenses.
- The Senate Agriculture Committee will consider legislation to establish a minimum biodiesel fuel content mandate for diesel fuel sold in Missouri. HB 529, sponsored by Representative Mike Haffner (R-Pleasant Hill), passed the House by a vote of 88 to 40.



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