

## **2024 Legislative Session - Just Around the Corner**

The 2024 Regular Legislative Session is right around the corner, commencing on Wednesday January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Legislators are allowed to file bills before the legislative session starts during a period called “pre-filing.” This began on December 1<sup>st</sup> and we have seen a record number of bills filed during the pre-filing period.

### **SNF Medicaid Funding:**

Our number one priority this session will be to advocate for additional SNF Medicaid reimbursement. Our goal will be to secure a rebase to the SNF Medicaid rate to capture your post-COVID costs. As you know the last rebase was based on FY2019 costs and didn’t capture the significant increase in costs you have incurred post COVID.

### **Renewal of the FRA:**

This session we must also renew the Federal Reimbursement Allowance (FRA) program. As you know, the FRA is a program that draws down federal funds and is responsible for approximately \$3.3 billion in the Medicaid budget. The Nursing Facility program or Nursing Facility Reimbursement Allowance (NFRA) provides nearly 40% of the funding to our SNF Medicaid rate. Other providers like hospitals, emergency services and pharmacists also rely on this funding mechanism for their own Medicaid rate. This year, Senator Hough (the Senate Appropriations Chair) has filed the renewal of the FRA as Senate Bill 748.

As we previously have mentioned, the importance of this program will cause other legislators to threaten its passage if their politically charged priorities are not added to the bill as amendments. The last time the FRA program was up for renewal we were forced into a special session as several legislators would not allow it to pass the regular session without a completely unrelated abortion amendment. That amendment would have jeopardized the FRA program and likely put the Missouri Medicaid program out of compliance with CMS. This year will be no different and the Missouri Right to Life is already engaging with legislators who are threatening to stop the passage of the renewal of the FRA if an amendment related to abortion is not included in the bill (which is completely unrelated to the FRA program). We will keep you updated as this progresses and will likely ask our members to reach out to their legislators, at the appropriate time, through a “call to action” and explain how vital this program is to our Medicaid rate and to pass this without any unrelated amendments that would likely jeopardize the program.

### **Other Legislation Impacting the Long Term Care Industry:**

Finally, we will be looking to promote legislation that help alleviate the workforce shortage in Missouri as well as look to defeat any legislation that could be cumbersome and damaging for our industry. Although many bills will be filed, keep in mind that the budget bills will not be filed until later in January after the Governor has announced his budget priorities and recommendations for

the rest of the budget items. We will begin updating you on legislation of importance in the next month.