

Bill: 2nd substitute HB 269 – Ambulance Provider Payment Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Maloy

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Support

This Bill amends provisions regarding ambulance provider payments.

Discussion: The sponsor explained that the intent of this Bill is to ensure Utah ambulance providers are fairly compensated for the services they deliver. The Bill removes unnecessary statutory limitations on ambulance billing, aligns the base rate with the actual cost of emergency medical care, and includes the cost of medications in allowable charges. It also permits predictable and limited annual rate adjustments and allows the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services to update the base rate each year. The sponsor emphasized that the goal of the Bill is to promote financial stability for providers. The sponsor further explained that the Bill clarifies what ambulance providers may collect by limiting charges to a base rate plus a mileage rate, while maintaining existing patient protections against balance billing. Narrow exceptions apply in limited circumstances, including for uninsured individuals or when services are denied because they are not covered by an insurance plan. The Bill also removes an unnecessary sunset date.

Representative Dunnigan questioned the fiscal note associated with the Bill. The sponsor responded that the Department of Health and Human Services estimated a fiscal impact of approximately \$202,200, which includes Medicaid-related costs. Committee members also questioned the elimination of the sunset provision.

Blue Cross Blue Shield testified in support of the Bill. A former fire chief representing Gold Cross, the Utah State Fire Chiefs Association, and the Rural EMS Directors Association of Utah also spoke in support. The Committee adopted the 2nd substitute.

Yeas: 11

Nays: 0

N/V: 5

Outcome: 2nd Substitute HB 269 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: HB 130 – Employment Medical Examination Expense Amendments

Sponsor: Representative Gwynn

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track

This Bill modifies provisions relating to an expense when an employer requires a medical examination.

Discussion: The sponsor explained that the Bill corrects an error in current statute regarding employer reimbursement for required employee medical examinations. Under existing law, employees may be forced to use vacation time or miss work to complete employer-required medical exams. The Bill clarifies that employees may not be required to use vacation time to attend a medical examination when the exam is required as a condition of employment.

The Bill applies only to medical examinations that are directly related to employment. If drug testing is part of pre-employment screening or random testing, the employer may not require the employee to pay for the test. Representative Sawyer questioned the distinction between on-the-job injuries and personal injuries, and it was clarified that only on-the-job injuries and related evaluations would be paid for by the employer.

Concerns were raised regarding prospective employees being required to pay for physical examinations before being hired. The HR Director for Lehi City spoke to concerns about the broad language of the Bill, specifically the lack of clarity around the term “medical examination”. The sponsor clarified that if an employee uses illicit drugs outside of work hours and fails a random drug test, the employer would not be required to pay for any resulting medical follow-up.

House Amendment 2, which adds “‘Medical examination’ does not include an appointment conducted to obtain clearance for an employee to return to work following an injury or illness that occurs outside the course and scope of employment” and that an “employer may not...require an employee to receive a medical exam that the employer requires outside of the employee's shift without pay; or require an employee to use leave to receive a medical exam that the employer requires”, was adopted by the Committee.

Yeas: 10

Nays: 0

N/V: 6

Outcome: HB 130, as amended, passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.