

## **State Budget, Pharmacist Scope Bill, and Sexual Assault Package Move in Legislature**

The Michigan House and Senate passed all department budgets this week, meeting another milestone in the Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations process. This moves budgets one step closer to conference committee, where appointed legislators from each subcommittee will meet to negotiate differences between the House and Senate budgets. The Legislature is required to submit its final budget to Gov. Whitmer by July 1.

Both chambers' proposed state spending for Oct. 1, 2023, through Sept. 30, 2024, is higher than the Governor's \$79.4 billion executive budget recommendation released in February. The Senate budget comes in at \$79.5 billion, while the House is at \$81.4 billion.

No changes have been made to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services budget since it was approved by the subcommittee in early April. [\*\*Within the MDHHS budget is funding for MAFP's priorities\*\*](#)

: the MIDOCs residency program, Michigan State Loan Repayment Program, and increased Medicaid physician payment.

Next in the state budget process is the Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference on May 19. At this conference, House, Senate, and budget experts will revise state revenue estimates to be used in identifying final numbers for the conference committee's FY 2024 budget negotiations.

### **Pharmacist Scope Bill**

While the budget work took front stage in the Legislature this week, other bills continued through the legislative process as well.

[\*\*Senate Bill 219\*\*](#) moved through the Senate, which would allow pharmacists to continue administering vaccines as they were authorized to do during the COVID-19 public health emergency; it would also authorize pharmacists to test and advise patients on several medical conditions.

A SB 219 substitute was adopted, and the bill passed the Senate 36-1 on May 11, to limit pharmacists' testing authority to influenza, COVID, and respiratory infections. Still of concern, however, is that the bill allows pharmacists to administer antiviral medications based on test results, without a physician's prescription. As the substitute moves to the House for consideration, the MAFP advocacy team and Advocacy Committee continue to discuss bill provisions of concern with legislators. The bill as it currently stands is not expected to be the final version for passage.

## **Sexual Assault Bill Package**

A bill package aimed at addressing sexual assault by physicians has passed the Senate and is now before the House Criminal Justice Committee. [\*\*Senate Bills 66-73\*\*](#) would set document retention and staffing requirements for procedures involving vaginal or anal penetration and establish punishments for physicians who knowingly assault a patient under the guise of medical care. MAFP has been working with the bill sponsors to prevent the legislation from placing undue burden on and punishing physicians who are treating patients within the standard of care.