RSNJ Legislative Report 3/16/21

Report from Trenton

Since my last report, there have been a number of developments in the Legislature. S3518/A5466 were introduced. The bills define network adequacy by limiting an adequacy determination to in State medical providers. Committee hearings are expected in the near future. I am waiting to learn the position of the health insurer industry.

Legislation was recently introduced by Senator Joseph Lagana to modify the out of network arbitration process to provide medical providers with increased access to the arbitration process, S3458.

The Governor signed legislation to require medical providers to more accurately identify themselves consistent with their actual licensed status.

The Access to Care Coalition supports these legislative initiatives. Currently, the Coalition is conducting a survey to identify themes regarding scope of practice which resonate with legislators. The results of the survey will be used to craft a limited media campaign aimed at policy makers to support maintaining scopes of practice once the current health emergency is ended. The timing of the campaign is not settled at this time primarily because this is an election year in which we will see significant changes to the Legislature in terms of new members in 2022 not a change regarding which party will be in control. Already, it is certain that over 10% of the Senate will consist of new members.

From now until June 30, the dominate issue for the Legislature is its review and passage of Governor Murphy’s 2021-22 State Budget. The proposed budget is for $45 billion, no new taxes and no program reductions. It is an election year budget.

Regarding the November elections and as I have said before, all 120 legislative seats are on the ballot as is the Governor. The expectation is the Democrats will maintain their significant majorities and Governor Murphy will be re-elected. The Republican challenger will be former Assemblyman Jack Ciatterelli. I spoke with him last week and he requested that I ask the PAC to be supportive of his campaign. If the decision is to be supportive, we can discuss various avenues to do so.

Attached is the bill tracking report for your review. If you have any questions, please feel free. Thank you. Paul