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2019-2020 Legislative Agenda

The Providers' Council surveyed its statewide human service membership on legislative priorities prior to the start of the session in January 2019. Our legislative agenda is based on feedback and input from our members, our Public Policy Committee, Executive Committee and Board of Directors. The Council's four priorities for the legislative session are as follows:

Fair pay for comparable work

House Bill 138 filed by Rep. Kay Khan | Senate Bill 1077 filed by Sen. Cindy Friedman

This bill would set a schedule to eliminate the pay disparity between state workers and those employed by private, community-based human services nonprofits who are doing similar work under state contracts, providing care and services to residents on behalf of the Commonwealth. It would also authorize reports from the administration on the current pay disparity between workers and new strategies to recruit and retain human services workers at community-based nonprofits.

Education loan repayment program

House Bill 163 filed by Rep. Jeffrey Roy | Senate Bill 56 filed by Sen. Eric Lesser

This bill would create an education loan repayment program for human service workers that work under state contracts to serve clients on behalf of the Commonwealth. To be eligible, workers must be working at least 35 hours per week, have an individual income of no more than \$50,000 per year and have maintained 12 consecutive months of employment in the sector. The program would allow workers to receive up to \$150/month for a period not to exceed 48 months to repay a qualified education loan that was used to attend an institution of higher learning.

Health insurance aggregation

House Bill 1171 filed by Rep. Jack Lewis | Senate Bill 573 filed by Sen. Sal DiDomenico

This bill would allow the Providers' Council to aggregate its members for the purpose of purchasing health insurance that meets minimum creditable coverage requirements as defined by the Massachusetts Health Insurance Connector Authority under 956 CMR 5.00. The legislation would deem the Providers' Council a "qualified association" and an approved "small business purchasing cooperative," allowing the association to aggregate human service providers of any size for the purposes of securing more competitive rates when buying health insurance.

Exemption from EMAC Supplement

House Bill 1594 filed by Rep. Gerry Cassidy | Senate Bill 1098 filed by Sen. Michael Moore

This bill would exempt community-based human services organizations from making EMAC Supplement payments. While the Department of Unemployment Assistance created a waiver process for EMAC Supplement payments, it is cumbersome and requires organizations to produce various documents each quarter. Under the legislation, human services organizations holding purchase-of-service contracts with EOHHS, EOEA, DEEC and DHCD would be fully exempted from making EMAC Supplement payments.

For more information:

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