

2025

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MMA
MONTANA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

MMA FINAL REPORT



2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 69th Montana legislative session came to a close on Wednesday, April 30, 2025. Unsurprisingly, A central focus of the session was healthcare, where significant policy changes were enacted. Notably, the legislature voted to remove the sunset clause from the state’s Medicaid expansion program, ensuring the continuation of coverage for tens of thousands of Montanans. Additionally, substantial investments were made in the state’s behavioral health system, with the approval of approximately \$124 million in funding aimed at improving facilities, expanding community-based services, and reforming commitment procedures. The healthcare debate also included discussions around workforce, easing of administrative burdens, and how to improve healthcare access in rural communities.

The Montana Medical Association successfully advocated for several key healthcare policies and reforms, including: modernizing medical malpractice non-economic damages cap; reducing prior authorization burdens; banning non-compete agreements; addressing healthcare worker burnout; strengthening support of residency programs; opposing the expansion of the scope of practice for chiropractic to include prescribing rights and the licensing of unmatched medical students, while educating on the potential harm; and preventing legislation that would weaken state vaccine policies.

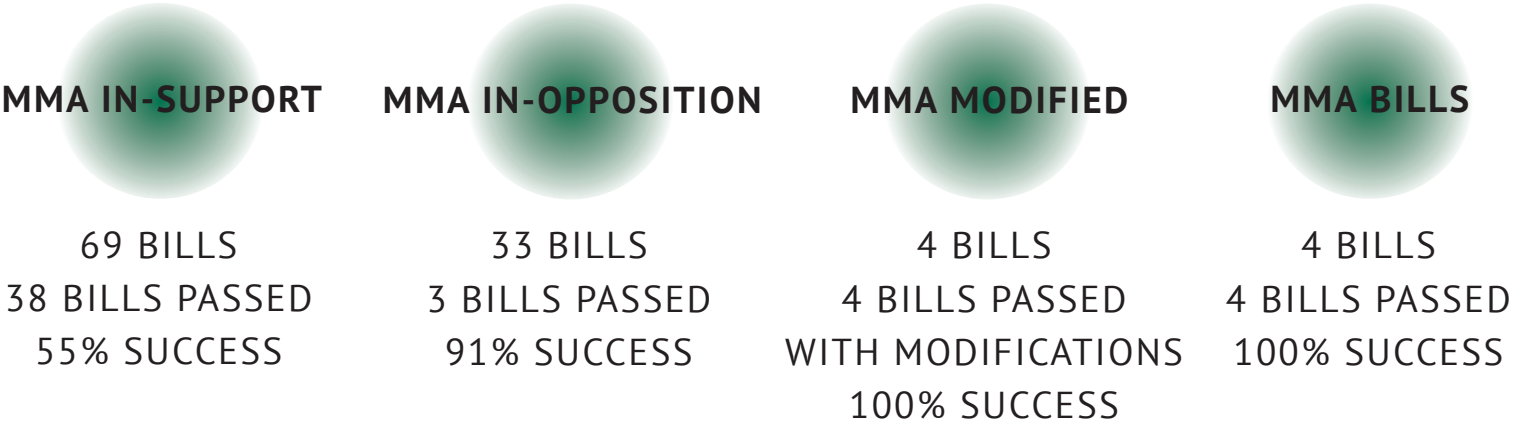
Our advocacy efforts during the 2025 legislative session were greatly enhanced by the contributions of many, and we thank you all. The work of the session requires significant resources and support, a need that continues to grow. We are proud to collaborate with you in the fight for healthcare access, the physician profession, and the health of Montana; your support is essential to our success.

FINAL SCORE

BILLS MONITORED:
OVER 700 BILLS

BILLS TRACKED:
231 BILLS

POSITIONS TAKEN:
106 BILLS



***NOTE:** Two bills vetoed by the governor have been overridden by their respective chamber and are in the process of a mail vote poll.

+ Bill passed by legislature

X Bill not passed or was vetoed

LEGISLATIVE BILLS: MMA BILLS—STATUS REPORT

BILL #	TITLE	SPONSOR	STATUS	POSITION
+ HB 195	Revise non-economic damages in medical malpractice actions.	Rep. Bill Mercer	Signed by Governor, effective immediately	MMA Bill - Support
+ HB 398	Generally revise insurance laws related to prior authorization of chronic conditions.	Rep. Jonathan Karlen	Chapter number assigned, effective 1/1/26	MMA Bill - Support
+ HB 620	Revise laws prohibiting contracts that restrict practice to include physicians of all specialties.	Rep. Steve Gist	Signed by Governor, effective and applicable 1/1/26	MMA Bill - Support
+ SB 497	Provide laws related to healthcare provider burnout.	Sen. Wendy McKamey	Chapter number assigned, effective immediately	MMA Bill - Support

LEGISLATIVE BILLS: PRIOR AUTHORIZATION—STATUS REPORT

BILL #	TITLE	SPONSOR	STATUS	POSITION
+ HB 399	Revise prior authorization laws.	Rep. Jonathan Karlen	Chapter number assigned	Med Society bill - Support
+ HB 544	Generally revise health insurance laws relating to health utilization review.	Rep. Ed Buttrey	Chapter number assigned, effective 1/1/26	Support
HB 610	Revise preauthorization laws relating to healthcare	Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe	Vetoed by Governor 5/5/25 -> House veto override mail vote poll in progress	Support

PRIOR AUTHORIZATION CONTINUED...

+ SB 317	Prohibit health insurers from performing prior authorization on psychiatric drugs in shortage or discontinued	Sen. Dennis Lenz	Chapter number assigned	Support
+ SB 446	Revise laws related to healthcare utilization review	Sen. Vince Ricci	Chapter number assigned	Support
+ SB 447	Revise laws related to prior authorization	Sen. Vince Ricci	Chapter number assigned	Support
+ SB 449	Generally revise health utilization review laws	Sen. Vince Ricci	Chapter number assigned	Support

LEGISLATIVE BILLS: PATIENT SAFETY — STATUS REPORT

BILL #	TITLE	SPONSOR	STATUS	POSITION
+ HB 218	Revising the practice of optometry to include certain laser procedures and in-office surgical procedures.	Rep. Ed Buttrey	Chapter number assigned, effective 7/1/25	Oppose to Modify
X HB 377	Generally revise access by parent to child patient health care information.	Rep. Nelly Nicol	Died in process	Oppose
+ HB 397	Revise laws related to privacy in mental health digital service.	Rep. Katie Sullivan	Chapter number assigned	Support
+ HB 475	Regulate restraints on women while giving childbirth	Sen. James Reavis	Chapter number assigned	Support

X HB 500	Generally revise laws related to chiropractic practitioners.	Rep. Greg Oblander	Died in process	Oppose
X HB 526	Adopt the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse license compact	Rep. Amy Regier	Died in Process	Oppose
X HB 653	Provide for parental right to access child's health care information	Rep. Nelly Nicol	Died in process	Oppose
+ HB 792	Generally revise laws related to cannabis labeling and education	Rep. Melody Cunningham	Chapter number assigned, effective 7/1/25	Support
X HB 929	Revisit of failed HB 500: Generally revise laws relating to chiropractic practitioners (prescribing uncontrolled substances)	Rep. Greg Oblander	Tabled in Senate Business, Labor and Economic Affairs Committee	Oppose
+ SB 109	Revise workers' compensation definition of treating physician to include physical therapists	Sen. Greg Hertz	Chapter number assigned	Oppose to modify
+ SB 218	Provide for private right of action for injuries caused by certain medical interventions to treat gender dysphoria	Sen. John Fuller	Chapter number assigned, effective 7/1/25	Oppose to modify
+ SB 456	Revise professions and occupations laws regarding dispensing of drugs	Sen. Tom McGillvray	Chapter number assigned	Support
X SB 563	Creating the Montana Bridge to Medical Residency Act	Sen. Kenneth Bogner	Died in standing committee	Oppose

LEGISLATIVE BILLS: ACCESS TO CARE — STATUS REPORT

BILL #	TITLE	SPONSOR	STATUS	POSITION
X HB 185	Provide for continuous healthy Montana kids plan eligibility for children under 6.	Rep. Ed Stafman	Died in standing committee	Support
X HB 230	Generally revise Medicaid laws	Rep. Mary Caferro	Tabled in House Human Services Committee	Support
+ HB 245	Revise the Montana HELP Act workforce development provisions and termination date	Rep. Ed Buttrey	Chapter number assigned, effective 10/1/25	Support
X HB 386	Revising laws related to continuous medicaid eligibility	Rep. SJ Howell	Died in procees	Support
X HB 555	Generally revise laws related to chemical abortion	Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe	Died in process	Oppose
+ HB 600	Authorize emergency use of albuterol in a school setting	Rep. Melody Cunningham	Chapter number assigned, effective 7/1/25	Support
+ HB 601	Create online portal for community assisters related to Medicaid	Rep. SJ Howell	Chapter number assigned	Support
X HB 609	Establish criminal offense of abortion trafficking	Rep. Kerri Seekins-Crowe	Died in process	Oppose
+ HB 682	Generally revise laws regarding gender transition treatment	Rep. Greg Kmetz	Signed by Governor, section 12 effective immediately and the rest of the bill effective 10/1/26	Oppose

+ HB 869	Provide for the sudden cardiac arrest prevention in youth sports	Rep. Melissa Romano	Signed by Governor, effective 7/1/25	Support
X HB 880	Establish a stabilization fund for medicaid	Rep. Mary Caferro	Vetoed by Governor 5/13/25	Support
X HB 881	Revise medicaid buy-in program to include children with disabilities	Rep. Mary Caferro	Died in process	Support
X HB 927	Generally revise laws related to illegal aliens	Rep. Lukas Schubert	Died in process	Oppose
+ HB 953	Revise medicaid laws related to direct primary care	Rep. Ed Buttrey	Signed by Governor, effective 7/1/25	Support
X SB 62	Provide for phaseout of Medicaid expansion program	Sen. Carl Glimm	Died in process	Oppose
X SB 112	Revise laws related to state purchase of opioid antagonists	Sen. Mike Yakawich	Died in standing committee	Support
X SB 164	Revise offense of endangering the welfare of children	Sen. John Fuller	Died in process	Oppose
X SB 187	Generally revise medicaid laws	Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy	Died in process	Support
X SB 199	Revise the Medicaid expansion program	Sen. Jeremy Trebas	Died in process	Oppose
+ SB 211	Revise emergency use of epinephrine in school setting to include nasal spray	Sen. Cora Neumann	Chapter number assigned, effective immediately	Support
SB 244	Revise laws related to health insurance coverage of behavioral health screening	Sen. Mike Yakawich	Vetoed by Governor 5/22/25 -> Senate veto override mail vote poll in progress	Support

ACCESS TO CARE CONTINUED...

X <u>SB 295</u>	Restoring the right for injured worker to choose their own doctor	Sen. Andrea Olsen	Died in process	Support
X <u>SB 353</u>	Revise right to try laws to include minors with a terminal illness	Sen. Kenneth Bogner	Died in process	Oppose
X <u>SB 354</u>	Prohibit purchase of soft drinks and candy with SNAP benefits	Sen. Daniel Zolnikov	Died in standing committee	Support
+ <u>SB 422</u>	Generally revise laws relating to insurance coverage relating to cancer	Sen. Ellie Boldman	Signed by President	Support
X <u>SB 438</u>	Revise telehealth and telemedicine laws	Sen. Daniel Zolnikov	Died in process	Oppose
X <u>SB 483</u>	Generally revise health care laws	Sen. Ellie Boldman	Died in process	Support
+ <u>SB 503</u>	Allow use of expired opioid antagonists	Sen. Cora Neumann	Chapter number assigned	Med Society bill - support
+ <u>SB 535</u>	Revise laws related to experimental treatments	Sen. Kenneth Bogner	Chapter number assigned, effective immediately	Oppose to Modify
+ <u>SJ 33</u>	Interim study of the prescription drug supply chain	Sen. Sue Vinton	Filed with Secretary of State	Support
+ <u>SJ 37</u>	Interim survey of behavioral health services in Montana	Sen. Dennis Lenz	Filed with Secretary of State	Support

LEGISLATIVE BILLS: PUBLIC HEALTH — STATUS REPORT

BILL #	TITLE	SPONSOR	STATUS	POSITION
X HB 50	Provide protections to parents and pregnant women with substance use disorder.	Rep. Ron Marshall	Died in standing committee	Support
X HB 149	Generally revise alternative nicotine and vapor products laws.	Rep. Ron Marshall	Died in process	Oppose
X HB 174	Revise laws related to drug assault crimes.	Rep. Neil Duram	Died in process	Oppose
X HB 177	Revise tobacco, alternative nicotine, and vapor product laws.	Rep. Frank Smith	Died in process	Support
X HB 199	Increase physician assistant membership on the board of medical examiners.	Rep. Jodee Etchart	Died in process	Oppose
X HB 364	Generally revise laws related to immunizations.	Rep. Melody Cunningham	Senate 2nd reading indefinitely postponed	Med Society bill - support
X HB 371	Ban mRNA vaccinations in Montana for humans.	Rep. Greg Kmetz	Died in process	Oppose
X HB 385	Establishing the school mental health promotion pilot program	Rep. Melissa Romano	Died in process	Support
X HB 494	Revise tobacco settlement allocations	Rep. Ron Marshall	Died in process	Oppose
X HB 498	Prohibit adding fluoride to public water supply systems.	Rep. Lukas Schubert	Died in process	Oppose

PUBLIC HEALTH CONTINUED...

X HB 525	Generally revise laws relating to nicotine and vapor products	Rep. Amy Regier	Died in process	Support
+ HB 590	Generally revise laws related to electronic health care records	Rep. Greg Oblander	Signed by Governor, effective 7/1/26	Support
X HB 747	Authorize certain day-care centers to adopt policy regarding certain immunization exemptions	Rep. Mary Caferro	Died in process	Support
X HB 850	Provide licensing and regulation of community health workers	Rep. Ed Buttrey	Vetoed by Governor 5/13/25	Support
X HJ 60	Interim study on the effects and regulation of kratom	Rep. Curtis Schomer	Died in process	Support
X SB 98	Revise tax rate on cigarettes that are not burned	Sen. Becky Beard	Died in process	Oppose
X SB 150	Generally revise alcohol and tobacco laws.	Sen. Wylie Galt	Died in process	Oppose
X SB 382	Requiring acceptance of religious or conscience exemptions to immunizations	Sen. Daniel Emrich	Died in process	Oppose
+ SB 390	Revise definitions in Clean Indoor Air Act	Sen. Willis Curdy	Chapter number assigned, effective immediately	Support
X SB 443	Revise drug laws to regulate THC levels	Sen. Greg Hertz	Died in process	Support
X SB 474	Require acceptance of religious and personal medical exemptions to required vaccines.	Sen. Daniel Emrich	Died in process	Oppose

X SB 475	Ban aluminum in vaccines	Sen. Daniel Emrich	Died in process	Oppose
X SB 479	Generally revise laws related to chemical abortion	Sen. Theresa Manzella	Died in process	Oppose
+ SR 14	Resolution to include Montana in the radiation exposure compensation act	Sen. Andrea Olsen	Filed with Secretary of State	Support

LEGISLATIVE BILLS: OTHER

STATUS REPORT

BILL #	TITLE	SPONSOR	STATUS	POSITION
X HB 163	Provide for health care preceptor individual income tax credit	Rep. Ken Walsh	Died in process	Support
+ HB 342	Revise civil liability laws to provide a statutory duty of care for certain actions	Rep. Bill Mercer	Chapter number assigned, effective and applicable immediately	Support
X HB 407	Create the kratom consumer protection act	Rep. Nelly Nicol	Died in process	Oppose
X HB 437	Provide for dismissal of certain criminal charges against health care provider	Rep. Ed Stafman	Died in process	Support
X HB 459	Increasing the number of physician assistants on the board of medical examiners	Rep. Jodee Etchart	Died in process	Oppose
+ HB 543	Repeal termination date on reporting and disclosure of violence against health care employees	Rep. Ed Buttrey	Chapter number assigned, effective immediately	Support

OTHER CONTINUED...

X HB 556	Generally revise usage of artificial intelligence in certain health insurance employees	Rep. Jill Cohenour	Died in process	Support
+ HB 723	Establish annual reporting requirements of infants born alive	Rep. Lee Deming	Chapter number assigned	Oppose
+ HB 740	Revise laws relating to pharmacies, pharmacy benefit managers, and other entities	Rep. Marta Bertoglio	Chapter number assigned, applicable on or after 10/1/25	Support
X HB 750	Provide for annual increase of Medicaid provider reimbursement rates	Rep. Mary Caferro	Died in process	Support
X HB 797	Generally revise occupational licensing laws	Rep. Greg Oblander	Died in process	Oppose
+ HB 825	Generally revise laws related to health care proxy decision makers	Rep. Melody Cunningham	Chapter number assigned	Support
X HB 826	Generally revise tobacco tax laws	Rep. Melody Cunningham	Died in process	Support
X HB 910	Provide for taxation of vapor products	Rep. Mary Caferro	Died in process	Support
+ SB 18	Revise the definition of child abuse or neglect	Sen. Dennis Lenz	Chapter number assigned	Support
X SB 136	Prohibit consent as a defense for physician assisted suicide	Sen. Carl Glimm	Died in process	Modify to support

+ SB 163	Generally revise privacy laws related to biometric, genetic, and neural data	Sen. Daniel Zolnikov	Chapter number assigned	Med Society bill - support
X SB 216	Creating the Montana physicians' workforce investment act	Sen. Dennis Lenz	Died in process	Support
X SB 325	Creating family and medical leave act	Sen. Derek Harvey	Died in process	Support
+ SB 347	Revise medical resident licensure laws	Sen. Sue Vinton	Chapter number assigned	Support
X SB 478	Require higher education institutions to pay medical costs associated with mandated COVID-19 vaccinations	Sen. Theresa Manzella	Died in process	Oppose
X SB 526	Establish the community health aide provider education grant program	Sen. Jonathan Windy Boy	Died in process	Support
+ SR 22	Confirm governor's appointees for the board of medical examiners	Sen. Dennis Lenz	Filed with Secretary of State	Support
+ SR 82	Confirm governor's appointee for the commissioner of labor and industry	Sen. Mark Noland	Filed with Secretary of State	Support
+ SR 86	Confirm governor's appointee for the board of medical examiners	Sen. Dennis Lenz	Filed with Secretary of State	Support
+ SR 104	Confirm governor's appointee for director of the department of public health and human services	Sen. Dennis Lenz	Filed with Secretary of State	Support

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Montana Medical Association is the largest statewide organization comprised of physicians, medical residents, and medical students. The MMA advocates for the medical profession, quality patient care, and the health of all Montana citizens.

The MMA successfully checked ALL of the Association's priorities during the 2025 Legislative Session:

ENSURING ACCESS TO QUALITY PATIENT CARE

- Modernize current non-economic damages limitation applicable to medical malpractice cases.
- Fix prior authorization requirements to stop delays in medically necessary care and reduce time consuming administrative burdens.
- Maintain current Medicaid program.

BUILDING AN EMPOWERED WORKFORCE

- Make healthcare healthier: build capacity by promoting well-being, addressing career fatigue.
- Strengthen retention by banning non-compete agreements.
- Build tomorrow's physician workforce through the support and growth of medical education and residency programs.
- Boost recruitment and retention with an environment in which the practice of medicine has not been criminalized.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the MMA Legislation, Legal, and Legislative Officers Committee members who met throughout the 2025 Legislative Session to determine our positions, strategies, and for effectively engaging in the process.

Co-Chair: Nicole Clark, MD

Co-Chair: Kristin Anderson, MD

Members: Cara Harrop, MD

Jonathan Bingham, MD

Lauren Wilson, MD

Megan Metcalf, MD

Michael Temporal, MD

Sarah Morgan, MD

Shawna Yates, DO

Tim Mitchell, MD

William Gallea, MD

MMA Lobby Team: Jean Branscum, MMA CEO

Justin Cole, MMA Legal Counsel

Rob Cook, Coyote Consulting

SAVE

FORWARD TOGETHER



12-13 SEPTEMBER
2025

THE

DATE

**Best Western Premier Helena
Great Northern Hotel**



835
Great Northern Blvd,
Helena, MT 59601

NOMINATE A COLLEAGUE FOR AN AWARD

The MMA is accepting nominations for the 2025 Award of Merit, the Doctor Jack McMahon Service to Montana Physicians Award, and the Legacy of Leadership Award. Nominations can be submitted to the MMA Executive Office until May 23, 2025. Distinguished recipients will be presented with their awards of achievement at the MMA Annual Meeting on September and in Helena.

Please [click here](#) to nominate a colleague or to find more information about nominations.