

Journal of the Senate

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024

The Senate was called to order by the President.

Devotional Exercises

Devotional exercises were conducted by the Reverend Canon Lee Alison Crawford of Northfield.

Bill Referred to Committee on Appropriations

H. 649.

House bill of the following title, appearing on the Calendar for notice, and carrying an appropriation or requiring the expenditure of funds, under the rule, was referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

An act relating to the Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Proposal of Amendment; Third Reading Ordered

H. 861.

Senator Chittenden, for the Committee on Finance, to which was referred House bill entitled:

An act relating to reimbursement parity for health care services delivered in person, by telemedicine, and by audio-only telephone.

Reported recommending that the Senate propose to the House to amend the bill by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 1. 8 V.S.A. § 4100I is amended to read:

§ 4100I. COVERAGE OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES DELIVERED BY
AUDIO-ONLY TELEPHONE

* * *

(b)(1) A health insurance plan shall provide coverage for all medically necessary, clinically appropriate health care services delivered remotely by audio-only telephone to the same extent that the plan would cover the services if they were provided through in-person consultation. Services covered under this subdivision shall include services that are covered when provided in the home by home health agencies.

(2)(A) A health insurance plan shall provide the same reimbursement rate for services billed using equivalent procedure codes and modifiers, subject to the terms of the health insurance plan and provider contract, regardless of whether the service was provided through an in-person visit with the health care provider or by audio-only telephone.

(B) The provisions of subdivision (A) of this subdivision (2) shall not apply in the event that a health insurer and health care provider enter into a value-based contract for health care services that include care delivered by audio-only telephone.

(c) A health insurance plan may charge an otherwise permissible deductible, co-payment, or coinsurance for a health care service delivered by audio-only telephone, provided that it does not exceed the deductible, co-payment, or coinsurance applicable to an in-person consultation.

~~(3)~~(d) A health insurance plan shall not require a health care provider to have an existing relationship with a patient in order to be reimbursed for health care services delivered by audio-only telephone.

Sec. 2. REPEAL; TELEMEDICINE REIMBURSEMENT PARITY SUNSET

2020 Acts and Resolves No. 91, Sec. 27 (repealing 8 V.S.A. § 4100k(a)(2), telemedicine reimbursement parity, on January 1, 2026) is repealed.

Sec. 3. 2024 Acts and Resolves No. 82, Sec. 1(a)(1) is amended to read:

(a)(1) The Commissioner of Taxes may approve an application by a municipality for reimbursement of State education property tax payments owed under 32 V.S.A. § 5402(c) and 16 V.S.A. § 426. To be eligible for reimbursement under this section, prior to ~~April~~ November 15, 2024, a municipality must have abated, in proportion to the abated municipal tax, under 24 V.S.A. § 1535 the State education property taxes that were assessed on eligible property, after application of any property tax credit allowed under 32 V.S.A. chapter 154.

Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on January 1, 2025, except this section and Sec. 3 (extension for flood abatement reimbursement) shall take effect on passage.

And that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read:

An act relating to reimbursement parity for health care services delivered in person, by telemedicine, and by audio-only telephone and extending time for flood abatement reimbursement

And that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with such proposal of amendment.

Senator Westman, for the Committee on Appropriations, to which the bill was referred, reported recommending that the bill ought to pass in concurrence with proposal of amendment as recommended by the Committee on Finance.

Thereupon, the bill was read the second time by title only pursuant to Rule 43, the proposal of amendment was agreed to, and third reading of the bill was ordered.

Adjournment

On motion of Senator Baruth, the Senate adjourned until one o'clock in the afternoon on Thursday, April 18, 2024.