Local News



Mayer Tasks Group To Study Health Insurance

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By Annabeth Miller, ShowMe Times Editor

Missouri Senate Leader Rob Mayer of Dexter has created a special interim committee in the Senate to study various insurance exchange proposals and their compliance with Missouri law.

Mayer said the core focus of the interim committee would be to examine whether or not Missouri should follow federal guidelines and enact a health insurance exchange.

"As the effective date of the federal healthcare legislation approaches and the numerous challenges to the constitutionality of the program make their way through the courts," Mayer said, "I believe an interim committee is the best way to explore Missouri's options on the establishment of a health insurance exchange and the impact of state law on that exchange."

Mayer named Sen. Scott T. Rupp, R-Wentzville, as chairman of the committee. Other senators named to the committee include Sen. Jane Cunningham, R-Chesterfield; Sen. Jack Goodman, R-Mt. Vernon; Sen. Brad Lager, R-Savannah; Sen. Rob Schaaf, R-St. Joseph; Sen. Kiki Curls, D-Kansas City; and Sen. Joe Keaveny, D-St. Louis.

Legislation was considered by the General Assembly this year that would have established the Show-Me Health Insurance Exchange Act. The legislation, House Bill 609, would comply with requirements of federal healthcare reform legislation, known as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

But Mayer said some have concerns that complying with federal law and creating a health insurance exchange would be in violation of state law.

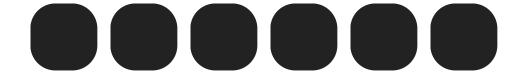
Last August, 71 percent of Missouri voters approved Proposition C, known as the "Health Care Freedom Act." The act, which is now state law, maintains that no federal law shall compel a patient, employer, or health care provider to participate in any government or privately run health care system, nor prohibit a patient or employer from paying directly for legal health care services.

To learn more about the interim committees announced this week, visit www.senate.mo.gov.

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