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Minnesota House of Representatives

Kurt Daudt, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Laws Effective Jan. 1, 2016

The following are selected new laws passed during the 2015 legislative session that take effect Jan. 1, 2016.

The asterisk following the bill number denotes the language that became law. All laws passed by the 2015 Legislature are available online from nonpartisan House Public Information Services at <http://www.house.mn/newlaws/#/search/2015>.

CIVIL LAW

Automated license plate reader policy requirements addressed

Automated license plate readers used by many community law enforcement agencies have raised data privacy issues.

A provision in a new law will require the chief law enforcement officer of the agency that uses automated license plate readers to, by Jan. 15, 2016, establish and enforce a written policy governing use of the reader, including employee discipline standards for unauthorized access to the data.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Vernon Center) and Sen. Ron Latz (DFL-St. Louis Park).

HF222/SF86*/CH67

CONSUMERS

Hospital financial aid policies call for more transparency

The IRS has enacted rules requiring nonprofit hospitals to tell patients of any financial assistance policy they may have before they undertake extraordinary collection efforts. However, there is no recourse in the state for a patient who thinks they were harmed by violation of these rules.

Rep. Debra Hilstrom (DFL-Brooklyn Center) and Sen. Kevin Dahle (DFL-Northfield) sponsor a new law that will provide some ability for patients caught in this situation.

Under the new law, a patient can bring an action against a hospital that used extraordinary collection efforts and has not provided, in plain language, a summary of their financial assistance policy.

HF1647/SF1741*/CH20

ELECTIONS

Plans for elections during an emergency tasked

A task force was formed in July to come up with recommendations on how elections would be handled in case of an emergency prior to Election Day.

The group's report, addressing the following issues, is to be ready for the Legislature on day one of the New Year:

Potential emergency scenarios that could impact elections include:

- determining who has authority to address an emergency situation;
- what the costs would be of disrupting elections due to an emergency;
- ballot security during an event;
- continuity of operations procedures; and
- defining communication procedures and key emergency contacts.

Rep. Tim Sanders (R-Blaine) and Sen. Katie Sieben (DFL-Newport) sponsor the law.
HF840/SF455*/CH70

HEALTH

Intractable pain added to the medical cannabis use list

In early December, after a public hearing, intractable pain was added as one of the medical conditions qualifying for use of medical cannabis. This authority was granted to the commissioner of health in a law that took effect in August allowing for the use of the controversial treatment. By Jan. 1, 2016, the law also calls for the commissioner to report findings to the Task Force on Medical Cannabis Therapeutic Research on the need for adding intractable pain to the list to the qualifying conditions.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Dave Baker (R-Willmar) and Sen. Kent Eken (DFL-Twin Valley).
HF1792*/SF1471/CH74

INSURANCE

Long-term care policy changes effect disability income

The affordability of long-term care insurance policies was addressed in a law that took effect on July 1, 2015; however, a provision addressing disability income does not take effect until the New Year.

Under the provision, policy providers with a standard of review will no longer be allowed to indiscriminately deny claims for services for which the enrollee otherwise is entitled. This disability income coverage provision applies to policies issued or renewed on or after Jan. 1, 2016.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Joe Schomacker (R-Luverne) and Sen. Vicki Jensen (DFL-Owatonna).
HF954/ SF997*/CH59

STATE GOVERNMENT

Electronic document filing allowed in contested case hearings

A new law will allow individuals and agencies engaged in contested case hearings to file documents electronically with the Office of Administrative Hearings.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Drew Christensen (R-Burnsville) and Sen. Melissa Wiklund (DFL-Bloomington).

Contested case hearings are a way for individuals who feel they have been adversely impacted by a governmental action to argue their case before an independent body. The Office of Administrative Hearings is the agency that conducts those hearings.

HF1725*/SF1360/CH63

TRANSPORTATION

Insurance information required to register motor vehicles

Beginning Jan. 1, 2016, every owner, when applying for motor vehicle or motorcycle registration or transfer of ownership, must provide proof that the motor vehicle or motorcycle is covered by an insurance policy.

The provision is part of a larger transportation law that mostly took effect July 1, 2015. Under the new law, required information includes the insurance company's name, the policy number and the policy expiration date.

The new law is sponsored by Rep. Tim Kelly (R-Red Wing) and Sen. D. Scott Dibble (DFL-Mpls).

HF1733/SF1647*/CH75