

MINUTES

HOUSE & SENATE HEALTH SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE & SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE AND LABOR

December 4, 2017

The House and Senate Health Services Subcommittees met Monday, December 4, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. in Committee Room A, of the Multi-Agency Complex (MAC) Building, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Senate Health Services members attending: Senator Missy Irvin, Co-Chair.

House Health Services members attending: Representatives Chris Richey, Chair; Aaron Pilkington, Vice Chair; Justin Boyd, Deborah Ferguson, Robin Lundstrum, and John Payton.

Other legislators attending: Representatives Mickey Gates, Kim Hammer, Brandt Smith, James Sorvillo, DeAnn Vaught, Danny Watson, and Jeff Williams.

Comments by the Chairs

Representative Chris Richey called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve the October 10, 2017 Meeting Minutes (EXHIBIT C)

Representative Richey stated that without objection, the minutes from the October 10, 2017 meeting are approved.

Discussion of ISP 2017-039 – “An Act to Create the Healthcare Freedom of Conscience Act; and for Other Purposes.” (EXHIBIT D)

Representative Brandt Smith, Sponsor, and Steven Aden, Chief Legal Counsel, Americans United for Life; presented this ISP. Representative Smith presented background information of ISP2017-039, and introduced Mr. Aden as presenter for this ISP.

While presenting information regarding each American’s right to freedom of conscience, especially concerning healthcare, Mr. Aden stated that this right is being threatened. He stated that without proper legislation, employees may be forced by their employer to participate in activities such as abortion, and assisted suicide or be terminated. This could be despite their own religious or moral objections to the activity.

Mr. Aden feels that state and federal laws are needed to ensure a freedom of conscience is a guaranteed protected right. He said the law should have an enforcement mechanism that allows protection of all healthcare personnel. This ISP excludes emergency situations, and it prohibits coercion and discriminatory practices against healthcare professionals.

After many questions and much discussion, Representative Richey thanked Representative Brandt Smith and Mr. Aden for their presentation.

Discussion of ISP 2017-003 - “Requesting that the House Committee on Public Health, Welfare and Labor Study and Promote Awareness of Pediatric Acute-Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome, also known as ‘PANS’.”

(EXHIBIT E)

Representative Kim Hammer, Sponsor, and Richard Frye, MD, Neurologist, continued the discussion of this ISP from the October meeting. Matt Brumley, Director, Saline Health Foundation, and Liz Cinco, mother of a child who has been afflicted with ‘PANS/PANDAS’, assisted with this presentation.

Representative Hammer presented a brief background of each presenter and outlined the order of this presentation.

Mr. Brumley presented updates of several 'PANS/PANDAS' cases, and said that Saline Memorial Hospital is diagnosing an increasing number of these cases. The Cunningham Panel is a medical procedure that can confirm whether or not a child has 'PANS/PANDAS'. He also stated that Dr. Frye is an expert in this field, but he is relocating to Arizona.

Dr. Frye stated there is growing recognition of this illness around the country. He is an expert on Autism and 'PANS/PANDAS', but he treats many other biological and neurological disorders. Some autistic children who have trouble sleeping have had great results from behavioral therapy and the use of melatonin. Some disorders overlay with learning disabilities and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Dr. Frye noted that early diagnosis and intervention is always best. He stated there are undiagnosed children with the 'PANS/PANDAS' disorder who, because of behavior problems, are in the juvenile system as delinquents. Treatment for 'PANS/PANDAS', such as IVIG (Intravenous Immunoglobulin) is expensive and not covered by many insurance companies; therefore, many children go untreated. Dr. Frye confirmed that genetics and/or environment play a role in this illness.

Liz Cinco's son was originally misdiagnosed before he was diagnosed with 'PANDAS'. She described her son's journey with 'PANDAS'. After having 3-4 strep infections, he developed 'PANDAS'.

Representative Hammer would like the following agencies and organizations to attend a future Health Services Subcommittee meeting to further discuss 'PANS/PANDAS':

- ❖ Insurance Companies
- ❖ Arkansas Children's Hospital
- ❖ UAMS
- ❖ Arkansas Medicaid

Mr. Brumley stated that if a physician is highly confident his patient has 'PANS/PANDAS', Saline Memorial Hospital will pay for the Cunningham Panel medical procedure to test for this illness. Mr. Brumley said that the Saline Health Foundation receives many calls every day.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.