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2025 Legislative Session in Review

So many twists and turns...

What a strange session this was... First, there was a 67-67 tie in the House of Representatives, which hasn't happened since 1979. Then, a Democratic representative resigned because he didn't actually live in the district in which he was elected. Then, the Republicans wanted to take control with a 67-66 majority, while a special election was scheduled for the representative's seat. As a response, the Democrats boycotted the House. Finally, almost half-way through the session, after a new representative was sworn in and it became a 67-67 tie again, lawmakers began to work earnestly.

Meanwhile, over in the Senate, with a 34-33 Democratic majority, a Democratic senator passed away from cancer and their seat was replaced. Another Democrat awaited trial for a breaking and entering charge but continued to govern. And, a Republican was arrested and resigned. That seat went unfilled until a special election was held on April 29.

In the end, both chambers couldn't agree on a budget before the session closed on May 19. Gov. Tim Walz called them back three weeks later, and work was finally completed on June 9.

Despite this drama, the MMA was able to get most of its legislative priorities passed into law.

"What a way to end a career," said Dave Renner, CAE, MMA's director of advocacy, who is retiring after 38 years of service to the MMA. "I thought I had seen everything. Retirement will seem dull compared to all of the twists and turns we saw this year."

Here's a review of the session, including reports on MMA priorities as well as other healthcare-related legislation.

MMA's priority issues

MMA PRIORITY ISSUE	RESULT
Prohibit insurers from forcing patients to switch medications mid-year	Passed Legislators agreed to limit mid-year formulary changes. Insurers and pharmacy benefit managers will be prohibited from forcing patients to change from their current medication until the end of the contract year.
Increase MA outpatient reimbursements to 100% of Medicare level	Passed Legislators passed a new assessment on managed care organizations to increase federal funds that are used to increase MA reimbursements for mental health services. The MMA pushed to increase payments for all outpatient services, but in the end only mental health payments were increased.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The MMA mourns the assassination of **House Speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman** (DFL-Brooklyn Park) and her husband, as well as the shootings of **Sen. John Hoffman** (DFL-Champlin) and his wife on June 14. Speaker Hortman worked regularly with the MMA's advocacy team over the years to pass pro-medicine legislation. She was first elected to the House in 2004. She served one term as a member of the House Health and Human Services Finance Committee in 2013-2014. She became speaker in 2019. Hoffman served as a member of the Senate Health, Human Services and Housing Committee in his first term and has been a member of the Human Services Committee since 2017, chairing that committee starting in 2023.

MMA's priority issues

MMA PRIORITY ISSUE	RESULT	MMA PRIORITY ISSUE	RESULT
Establish a statewide POLST registry	Did not pass A legislatively mandated work group studied and developed recommendations to implement a statewide registry for Provider Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) forms. This session, the MMA hoped to take steps to begin implementing those recommendations so physicians, EMTs, and other providers can access these medical orders when they are needed. Funding for outreach and education regarding a statewide registry is needed to begin the phased-in implementation of the registry. Given the pending state deficit, legislators did not feel it was prudent to move this legislation without having a better idea of the cost and how much the registry would be used.	Promote well-being in Minnesota's healthcare workforce	Passed Legislators voted to allocate \$250,000 of one-time-only funding to the Treat Yourself First campaign. This campaign is designed to encourage healthcare practitioners to get help if they need it.
		Continued access to care through audio-only Telehealth coverage	Passed Legislators agreed to continue audio-only telehealth coverage for two more years.

Other healthcare-related legislative issues

LEGISLATION	BACKGROUND	PASSED	DID NOT PASS	MMA SUPPORT	MMA OPPOSE	MMA NEUTRAL
Reinstating "Born Alive" legislation	Republicans wanted to reinstate language that was amended in 2023 dealing with children who were "born alive" following an abortion. Supporters argued that without this change, unwanted children are left to die after being born alive. Opponents, including the MMA, argued that these situations usually involve a fetus that will not survive. Requiring life sustaining efforts for a child that will not survive removes a mother's chance to hold and bond with the newborn.		X		X	
Paid family and medical leave law	This bill would have postponed implementation of Minnesota's paid family and medical leave law, which passed in 2023.		X		X	
MinnesotaCare coverage for those with undocumented status	This bill removes MinnesotaCare coverage for those with undocumented immigrant status. After much debate, legislators compromised, limiting coverage to undocumented children only.	X			X	
Immunity from criminal liability	This bill would have given healthcare providers immunity from criminal liability when providing health treatment and services.		X	X		
Alternative pathway to licensure for IMGs	This bill creates an alternative pathway to licensure for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who have practiced as a physician in another country for at least 60 months in the previous 10 years, have ECFMG certification, have passed USMLE Steps 1 and 2, and have an offer of employment to work as a physician under a collaborative agreement, among other requirements.	X				X

Other healthcare-related legislative issues

LEGISLATION	BACKGROUND	PASSED	DID NOT PASS	MMA SUPPORT	MMA OPPOSE	MMA NEUTRAL
<i>Expanding optometrists' scope of practice</i>	This bill expands optometrists' scope of practice to allow them to conduct injections into and around the eyeball. The bill would also allow injections into facial and eye muscles, and allows optometrists to prescribe very strong and potentially dangerous oral medications, like steroids for 14 days, without physician consultation. Legislators compromised, expanding some prescribing authority and allowing optometrists to inject Botox.	X			X	
<i>Prohibiting prior authorization for cancer medication</i>	This bill would have prohibited prior authorization (PA) for medications on certain cancer treatments.		X	X		
<i>Maternal mental health for postpartum patients</i>	This bill would have improved maternal mental health services by requiring health plans to reimburse for services to provide comprehensive mental health services for pregnant and postpartum individuals.		X	X		
<i>Re-establishment of non-compete clauses</i>	This bill would have limited the ban on non-compete clauses for those who make more than \$500,000.		X		X	
<i>Authorization of a non-opioid directive</i>	This bill authorizes a non-opioid directive that includes instructions to health professionals that a patient must not be administered an opioid or be offered a prescription for an opioid, if they choose.	X				X
<i>Reinsurance funding</i>	This bill continues the state's reinsurance program for Minnesotans in the individual market for two more years. This program is funded partially with the Health Care Access Fund and through a new assessment on health plans.	X				X
<i>Provider tax increase</i>	This bill would have restored the provider tax to its original and longstanding level of 2%. It's currently at 1.8%.		X		X	
<i>Certified midwives in Minnesota</i>	This bill creates a new licensing option under the Minnesota Board of Nursing for certified midwives (CM). Proponents argued that the bill is needed to help with current workforce shortages.	X				X
<i>Mayo Medical School and family medicine residency funding</i>	State funding was cut for the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine and the family medicine residency program in the higher education budget bill. While both of these programs are expected to continue, there will be no state funding support. This is a result of the need to cut millions of dollars in future state funding.	X			X	





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How does an issue become an MMA priority?

The MMA Board of Trustees determines MMA legislative priorities based on the input from our physician and physician-in-training members through their participation in the Policy Council, committees, task forces, forums, The Pulse, member events, surveys, etc. MMA policies serve as the foundation for our legislative, regulatory and administrative advocacy efforts during the legislative session and throughout the year.

To get involved in MMA legislative, advocacy, and grassroots efforts, contact our legislative team or someone from our member relations team.

The MMA legislative team



Dave Renner, CAE

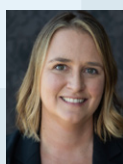
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