

Update on Legislative Efforts

The following highlights progress that has been made on PBA legislative priorities:

House Bill 45 (Right-to-Try Act): the PBA led a successful effort in amending House Bill 45, providing terminally ill patients with access to investigational drugs, biological products and medical devices. This bill was amended on the House floor on April 5 and received second consideration. PBA president Sara Austin wrote [this letter](#) to the House requesting their support.

House Bill 159: the PBA led another successful effort in revising this bill, which provides for “make up” time in custody contempt matters pursuant to 23 Pa.C.S. §5323(g). Rep. Tedd Nesbit, who sponsored the bill, was very receptive to the PBA’s proposed revisions regarding contempt matters and modified House Bill 159 prior to its introduction on Feb. 9. The bill was referred to the House Judiciary Committee the next day.

Senate Bill 76 (Sales tax on legal services): It’s too early to tell definitively, but it sounds like the coalition opposing this bill, which includes the PBA, may be bearing some fruit. It’s still critical that members continue to contact their state senator since this threat will likely originate in the Senate. Visit the PBA’s website (www.pabar.org) and click on [“Legislative Action Center”](#) for all the tools necessary to take action.

Other Legislative Matters of Interest

The following includes legislation that the PBA has no position on but may be of interest to members.

Senate Bill 261: Amends Title 41 to eliminate or extend statutes of limitation in criminal and civil cases involving child abuse. This bill quickly passed in the Senate with a unanimous vote and has received first consideration in the House.

House Bill 741: Amends Title 42 and 18 to cure constitutional defects regarding mandatory sentencing procedures for certain violent and drug trafficking offenses. After lively debate, it passed the House with a vote of 113-77 and has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

House Bill 203: Amends Title 20 to change the maximum payment of wages to the family of a since deceased employee from \$5,000 to \$10,000. This bill passed the House unanimously on April 3 and has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

House Bill 291: Amends Section 2116 of the Tax Reform Code to reduce the inheritance tax rate to 0 percent upon the transfer of property to or for the use of a child 21 years of age or younger from a natural parent, adoptive parent or a stepparent. This bill passed the House on April 4 with a vote of 176-21 and was referred to the Senate Finance Committee.