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Minnesota House of Representatives

Kurt Zellers, Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New laws take effect Jan. 1, 2013

Below is a list of selected new laws that take effect Jan. 1, 2013. The asterisk following the bill number denotes the language that became law.

As a reminder: The 2013 legislative session is scheduled to begin Jan. 8. For a daily electronic alert for news from the House, including committee coverage, subscribe to House Public Information Services at www.house.mn/hinfo/subscribesw.asp.

BUSINESS

Business solicitation restrictions clarified

Licensed health care providers will be prohibited from using third parties to solicit business from those who have been in automobile accidents, unless they clearly provide their names and the clinics where they work.

Sponsored by Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. Paul Gazelka (R-Brainerd), the law will require this information to be disclosed to consumers. Violating the statute could result in license revocation.

Abeler explained that the law would impact companies that may use unethical business practices, such as promising specific financial payments to those injured, or using actors posing as law enforcement to attract customers.

HF2749/SF2342*/CH255

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Young parents trying to finish school could benefit from day care change

Effective Jan. 1, 2013, there will be an extension to the number of absent days that child care providers can be reimbursed when children of young mothers, still in school, miss day care.

Currently, under the child care assistance programs, there is a limit of 10 absent days per fiscal year for which child care providers may be reimbursed.

Included in the omnibus health and human services law, sponsored by Rep. Jim Abeler (R-Anoka) and Sen. David Hann (R-Eden Prairie), the provision allows children in families who meet specified criteria to exceed the limit upon request of the program and approval of the county. The provision was part of a bill sponsored by Rep. Nora Slawik (DFL-Maplewood).

The law specifies that if a child attends the child care program for part of an authorized day, payment to the provider must be for the full amount of care authorized for that day.

HF2294*/ SF2093/CH247

INSURANCE

Portable electronic device insurance available as standalone product

Legislation regulating insurance on portable electronic devices is clarified by a new law.

Rep. Diane Anderson (R-Eagan), who sponsors the law with Sen. Paul Gazelka (R-Brainerd), said this insurance covers the loss or damage to portable devices such as mobile phones, laptops and iPads. Coverage is typically sold at the place of purchase.

Legislation passed in 2010 exempted the counterperson from having to be an independent insurance agent and required a vendor to provide training and keep a list of all locations that sell the insurance. Because many more places now sell portable electronics devices, supporters said system updates are needed.

The law requires that the insurance must be offered and sold separately, not as part of a package deal; allows training for sale of the insurance to be done electronically; requires a mandated disclosure to affirmatively state that upon cancellation of the insurance the premium will be refunded on a ratable basis to the customer; and allows coverage correspondence notices to be sent by mail or electronically.

HF2638*/SF2310/CH259

PUBLIC SAFETY

School buses to be equipped with crossing arm

All school buses used in the state that are manufactured after Jan. 1, 2013, will need to be equipped with a crossing control arm on the front right bumper that automatically expands out whenever the bus is stopped and the flashing red lights are in use. Additionally, adopted national school bus specifications are being updated to use 2010 standards instead of those created in 2005.

This piggybacks onto a law effective Aug. 1, 2012, that provides permissive authority for the placement of cameras on buses, modification of color requirements and allowance for equipment around the flashing signal lamps; auxiliary fans will be required.

The law is sponsored by Rep. Larry Howes (R-Walker) and Sen. Pam Wolf (R-Spring Lake Park).

HF392*/SF992/CH137