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Sen. Eric Schmitt's Bill to Decrease Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in Healthcare Receives Senate Approval

JEFFERSON CITY — A bill to increase transparency in Missouri's state-sponsored healthcare system was approved by the full Senate yesterday (4-23). [Senate Bill 549](#), sponsored by Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Glendale, would create an internet database of MO HealthNet (the state's Medicaid program) disbursements.

"This sort of watchdog measure is an important part of our efforts to reform Missouri's healthcare system," said Sen. Schmitt. "Senate Bill 549 creates an online database that can save the state real dollars and promote health by making sure recipients are receiving preventative care."

Specifically, the bill requires the MO HealthNet Division, by August 28, 2010, to create a database that, while protecting the privacy of MO HealthNet recipients' information, would make claim information available online. The bill requires the information provided be in a format that is easily accessible, useable, and understandable to the public. The information can then be accessed by individuals interested in improving the quality of care provided to individuals eligible for MO HealthNet programs and services, researchers, health care providers, and individuals interested in reducing the prevalence of waste and fraud under the program.

Once the database has been in place for a year, the director of the MO HealthNet Division would be required to submit to the General Assembly and the MO HealthNet oversight committee a report on the progress of the database. This information would include the extent to which information is accessed and the extent to which comments received on the database were used during the year to improve the program.

"I proposed this legislation to provide much needed transparency to track claims and payments, making it easier to spot instances of fraud and waste," said Sen. Schmitt. "I commend my colleagues in the Senate for supporting this legislation and urge the House to do the same."

The bill now moves to the House.

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