



Eric Schmitt
15th Senate District
Capitol Building, Room 334
Jefferson City, MO 65101

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

For Immediate Release:
July 14, 2009
Contact: (573) 751-2853

Measures Forwarded by Sen. Eric Schmitt Signed into Law

Provisions Empowering Parents, Promoting Transparency in Healthcare to Take Effect

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. Eric Schmitt (R-Glendale) today announced that the governor has signed into law [Senate Bill 291](#), which contains the Parents’ Bill of Rights and [House Bill 577](#), which includes the MO HealthNet Data Transparency program. Both provisions were originally included in legislation sponsored by Sen. Schmitt.

House Bill 577 was handled in the Senate by Sen. Scott T. Rupp (R-Wentzville). Sen. Schmitt successfully amended the bill to include the MO HealthNet Data Transparency program, originally included in Sen. Schmitt’s SB 549. The provision works to decrease waste, fraud, and abuse in the state’s healthcare system. In 2005, the *Kansas City Star* estimated that fraudulent Medicaid claims could total up to \$575 million a year. Sen. Schmitt’s legislation makes Missouri the first in the country to post Medicaid data online.

Specifically, the provision 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 provision requires the information provided be in a format that is easily accessible, usable, and understandable to the public. The information can then be accessed by those interested in improving the quality of care provided to individuals eligible for MO HealthNet programs and services, researchers, healthcare providers, and individuals interested in reducing the prevalence of waste and fraud under the program.

“In order to reform Missouri’s healthcare system, we must make sure that the system is efficient in delivering care and is not subject to abuse and fraud,” said Sen. Schmitt. “This online database provides much-needed transparency to track claims and payments and will save the state real dollars.”

The “Parents’ Bill of Rights” provision added to SB 291 by Sen. Schmitt was originally included in Sen. Schmitt’s SB 175. The measure requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to produce the Parents’ Bill of Rights to inform parents of children in an individualized education program (IEP) of their educational rights. The language of the bill also requires this information be given to parents well in advance of the IEP meeting.

“This provision makes sure that parents of children with special needs are aware of their rights in an educational setting,” said Sen. Schmitt. “I want parents to be clear on what they can ask for at their IEP meeting to maximize their child’s learning experience and development.”

Both SB 291 and HB 577 will go into effect on August 28th.

-END-
