



ALABAMA ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

Alabama Academy of Family Physicians Legislative Summary 2026

Alabama's 2026 legislative session addressed significant healthcare priorities, with proposals spanning cancer screening access, rural healthcare delivery, professional scope of practice, and healthcare innovation. Several bills advanced to law or final passage, while others were indefinitely postponed, reflecting ongoing legislative deliberation on complex healthcare policy issues affecting physicians, patients, and healthcare systems across the state.

Senate

SB 19 - Prostate Cancer Early Detection Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Sen. Steve Livingston, [SB 19](#) amends Alabama law to recognize African American men and men with first-degree relatives affected by prostate cancer as high-risk groups. It mandates health insurance plans to cover prostate cancer screening—including for younger high-risk men over 40 and all men over 50—without any cost-sharing such as deductibles or copayments, ensuring access to early detection services.

What happened: The bill has been signed by the Governor.

SB 63 - AI Prior Authorization Oversight Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Sen. Arthur Orr, [SB 63](#) regulates the use of artificial intelligence (AI) by health insurers in making coverage determinations under health benefit plans. It prohibits insurers from relying exclusively on AI for coverage decisions, mandates that denials or reductions be made by qualified health care professionals, requires disclosure to enrollees about AI use, and empowers the Alabama Department of Insurance to oversee compliance and penalize violations.

What Happened: The bill passed in both chambers and awaits the Governor's signature.

SB 80 - On-Site Physician Requirement for Emergency Departments

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Sen. Larry Stutts, [SB 80](#) mandates that all hospitals in Alabama with emergency departments must have at least one physician physically present and primarily responsible in the emergency department at all times it is open. This requirement is tied to hospital licensing and renewal and will become effective on October 1, 2026.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

SB 82 - No CON for Rural Areas

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Sen. Larry Stutts, [SB 82](#) eliminates the certificate of need requirement for new or expanded health care facilities and services located in rural areas of Alabama while maintaining reporting obligations to the State Health Planning and Development Agency (SHPDA). It also updates various legal definitions, removes duplicative language, and makes technical revisions for clarity and style in the existing healthcare code. The bill aims to facilitate healthcare expansion in rural areas by reducing regulatory hurdles without compromising state-level health planning and reporting.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

SB 97 - Alabama Health Command Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Sen. Gerald Allen, [SB 97](#) establishes the Alabama Health Command as an independent agency responsible for designating a single, state-headquartered business entity to develop a virtual AI-assisted health platform employing avatar-based technology for rural healthcare. The platform will facilitate virtual health management services—such as wellness education, appointment scheduling, and provider navigation—in rural communities without delivering medical diagnoses or treatment, while maintaining strict patient privacy and data protection standards. The bill also exempts rural healthcare providers using this platform from competitive bid laws to streamline adoption and implementation.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

SB 110 - Nurse Practitioner Athletic Physical Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Sen. Chris Elliot, [SB 110](#) amends Alabama law to explicitly allow physical examination forms for K-12 school athletic participation endorsed by certified registered nurse practitioners (CRNPs) or certified nurse midwives (CNMs) to be accepted as valid, equivalent to physician endorsements. It prohibits public K-12 schools from belonging to athletic associations that refuse to accept such endorsements, effective October 1, 2026.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

SB 297 - Hospital Reporting of Doctor Availability in Emergency Department Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Sen. Larry Stutts, [SB 297](#) requires Alabama hospitals to report quarterly on doctor availability in ED's and mandates they clearly disclose, both on-site and online, whether a physician is physically present in the emergency room.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

House

HB 24 - Religious Vaccine Exemption Bill for K-12 Students

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Rep. Mack Butler, [HB 24](#) clarifies and expands exemptions from vaccination and testing requirements for students in public K-12 schools and public institutions of higher education. It establishes that a written declaration from a parent or guardian is sufficient for religious exemption in K-12 settings, and requires public higher education institutions to allow both religious and medical exemptions upon written submission without third-party approval.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

HB 40 - Prostate Cancer Early Detection Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Rep. Jeremy Gray, [HB 40](#) amends Alabama law to recognize African American men and men with first-degree relatives affected by prostate cancer as high-risk groups. It mandates health insurance plans to cover prostate cancer screening—including for younger high-risk men over 40 and all men over 50—without any cost-sharing such as deductibles or copayments, ensuring access to early detection services.

What Happened: Senate Version became Law.

HB 115 - Rural Physician Tax Credit

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Rep. Ed Oliver, [HB 115](#) would update a rural physician tax credit aimed at attracting more doctors to practice in rural areas. The existing tax credit, established in 1993, is set to be enhanced to \$10,000, doubling its previous amount. This expansion will extend eligibility to physicians residing in counties with populations of 75,000 or fewer, as well as municipalities with populations of 20,000 or less - in a county with 75,000 or less. The updated tax credit seeks to incentivize physicians to serve in underserved rural communities, addressing long standing healthcare disparities and bolstering access to medical care for Alabama's rural residents.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

HB 127 - Off-Label Dispensing of Pharmacists & Allowing the Sale of Over-the-Counter sale of Ivermectin and Hydroxychloroquine

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Rep. Chip Brown, [HB 127](#) seeks to extend protections to pharmacists similar to those currently given to physicians regarding off-label drug use. It prohibits disciplinary actions against pharmacists recommending or dispensing off-label medications and protects them from employer or pharmacy benefits manager retaliation. The bill further allows over-the-counter sales of Ivermectin and Hydroxychloroquine in Alabama, effective October 1, 2026.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

HB 129: Midwives Newborn Screening Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Rep. Marilyn Land, [HB 129](#) authorizes licensed midwives in Alabama to not only order but also administer newborn screening tests as part of the state's Newborn Screening Program. It amends existing law to expand midwives' roles to include administration of specific health screenings

and tests for neonates and establishes requirements for midwives regarding client disclosures, informed consent, emergency planning, data reporting, and compliance with state health directives.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.

HB 146: Pharmacists Standing Order of Ivermectin Bill

What's in the bill: Sponsored by Rep. Phillip Rigsby, [HB 146](#) modifies existing prescription drug laws to allow pharmacists to dispense Ivermectin without an individual prescription, provided they have a standing order from a licensed physician, physician assistant, or certified registered nurse practitioner. It establishes protocols for dispensing under standing orders, prohibits inducements to promote Ivermectin use, and protects involved healthcare providers and pharmacists from licensure disciplinary actions related to dispensing Ivermectin under these conditions.

What Happened: Indefinitely Postponed.