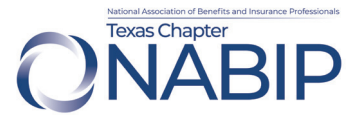


NABIP-TX eNews

September 1, 2023



Bi-monthly Publication

Attorney General Ken Paxton Impeachment Trial Starts Next Week



[NABIP-TX Legislative Update](#) [Mike & Shannon Meroney, Meroney Public Affairs](#)



so if you'd like to read more, or dig deeper into a particular topic, we have linked to more than twenty Tribune articles throughout this Meroney Memo column.

The historic impeachment trial of Attorney General Ken Paxton begins next week, and NABIP-Texas members have been asking plenty of questions about it... including: a) the charges/articles of impeachment; b) the key players; and c) the process. It's been said that the upcoming Senate trial is neither a criminal nor civil proceeding, but rather a political trial.

So, without attempting to make predictions or pick sides, here's our brief primer on what to expect beginning on Tuesday, September 5th. One of our favorite political publications – The Texas Tribune – has offered comprehensive coverage around the impeachment,

First, near the end of the regular legislative session in May, the House of Representatives started a political earthquake by impeaching AG Paxton on a variety of charges including bribery, misappropriation of resources, interference in a federal investigation, abuse of office, breach of fiduciary obligation and dereliction of duty, among others. At the time, they said the impeachment is not about punishing Paxton, but protecting the State of Texas. When the House impeached Paxton on a vote of 121-23, he was temporarily suspended from his duties as AG. By the way, the vote to impeach was bipartisan, with 60 Republicans and 61 Democrats voting aye.

Second, it will be up to the Texas Senate to conduct a trial to determine if Paxton is convicted or acquitted of any of the articles of impeachment. Each Senator will serve as a juror except for Sen. Angela Paxton (R, SD 8, McKinney) who is married to Attorney General Paxton and who (by the adopted Senate rules) can be present during the trial, but cannot deliberate or vote. If any article results in a conviction, Paxton will be permanently removed from office. If we presume all 12 Senate Democrats will vote to convict, then half (9 of 18) voting Senate Republicans would be needed to reach the required 21 votes to convict and remove Paxton.

Lt. Governor Dan Patrick will serve as presiding officer – essentially the judge of the trial. He has issued a broad gag order and appointed former appeals court judge, Lana Myers, to serve as counsel to help Lt. Gov. Patrick through rulings over evidence, admissibility

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AHA: Biden admin's short-term plan crackdown a good start on addressing 'convoluted' coverage gaps

By Dave Muoio - Hospitals are on board with the Biden administration's increased scrutiny of "inadequate" short-term health plans, and are hoping that the federal government will go further in its crackdown on payers' "convoluted policies." In early July, the White House said it was working to reverse a controversial Trump-era rule that expanded the duration of the controversial coverage option critics—patient advocates, medical groups and even some insurance industry organizations, often refer to as "junk plans".
Read Full Article...



TDI NEWS

Texas Department of Insurance Bulletin on insurance legislation enacted by the 88th Legislature

The Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) has issued a bulletin summarizing se-lect bills enacted by the 88th Legislature that affect insurance and the people and entities TDI regulates.



TDI issues emergency cease and desist order

The Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) issued an emergency cease and desist order (PDF) against Peachtree Casualty Insurance Company. The company is also known as Go Insurance Company (Go/Peachtree).

If your claim is not being handled in a timely manner, contact TDI and file a complaint.

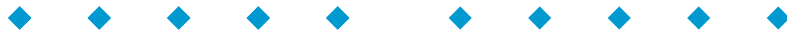
You can also call our Help Line at 800-252-3439 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central time, Monday through Friday.

Cigna Cuts 25% of Medical Services from Prior Authorization Requirements

Cigna removed 25% of medical services from prior authorization requirements. "This represents more than 600 codes, and includes 100 surgical codes, nearly 200 genetic testing codes, durable medical equipment, orthoses and prosthetics and other services", said Dr. Scott Josephs, chief medical officer of Cigna Healthcare.
Read Full Article...

Streamlining Healthcare Insurers' Processes: Unlocking Efficiency and Collaboration for Enhanced Outcomes

By Susan Taylor - The healthcare industry is constantly evolving, and recent news about insurers rolling back authorization requirements has been met with optimism. While this step forward is undoubtedly positive for healthcare providers and patients, it is essential to acknowledge that insurers still have a long way to go in streamlining processes and reducing administrative burdens. A comprehensive approach to process improvement and automation is required to enhance outcomes within the healthcare ecosystem. [Read Full Article...](#)



Companies Are Getting Serious About Their Employees' Mental Wellness

By Joseph Bednar - It's easy to tell when someone is struggling with asthma, Krista Mazzuca said. "If I come to work with bad asthma, you see me breathing hard. My supervisor says, 'hey, Krista, take a minute,'" said Mazzuca, first vice president of Human Resources at PeoplesBank. But mental distress, she noted, can be tougher to spot. [Read Full Article...](#)

Pharmaceutical Industry Rips 'Draconian' Price Negotiation Provision

By Noah Tong - The Biden administration and federal regulators may be taking a victory lap following the unveiling of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid services' (CMS) price negotiations list, but major players in the pharmaceutical industry feel the White House overstepped and think innovation will be stifled, ultimately leading to the creation of fewer life-changing drugs. [Read Full Article...](#)

How Much Is Long-Term Care Insurance?

By Les Masterson - Long-term care (LTC) insurance helps pay for long-term care like nursing homes, hospice care, adult day care and getting assistance with activities of daily living, such as bathing, dressing and eating. Long-term care insurance costs differ based on multiple factors. LTC rates aren't set and can increase as you age. People with pre-existing conditions or health problems may have trouble finding long-term care insurance or face hefty long-term care insurance costs. [Read Full Article...](#)

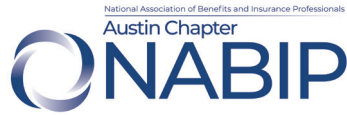


Low-quality Health Care Is Costing Employers Big

By Tina Reed - U.S. companies are spending big on employees' health, often with little insight into whether they're paying for quality care. Why it matters: Whether patients are given and stick with the best documented course of care — such as statins for heart disease — can have everything to do with what doctor they go to. [Read Full Article...](#)

September Chapter Agendas

AUSTIN



AUSTIN NABIP GOLF TOURNAMENT

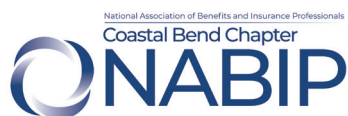
September 25, 2023 - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Balcones COUNTRY CLUB
8600 Balcones Club Drive - Austin, TX 78750

Please join us for our biggest Austin NABIP fundraiser of the year benefiting the SIMS Foundation!

The Austin NABIP is committed to enhancing the professional growth of its members through valuable educational programs and networking opportunities. Please support the association in continuing to facilitate the professional growth that allows us to help keep consumers informed about the changes in our industry, by participating in our annual golf fundraiser benefiting the SIMS Foundation.

www.austinhahu.org

COASTAL BEND



www.cbahuh.org

EAST TEXAS



www.etahu.org

DALLAS



What to Expect from a Health Plan Investigation

Join us for an informative session with Cesar San-tiago, Senior Benefits Advisor for the Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) at the U.S. Department of Labor.

Time & Location - September 20, 2023
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM - Vouy Event Center
4445 Sigma Rd, Dallas TX 75244
There will be no CE for this presentation.

What to Expect from a Health Plan Investigation

It can be a challenging time when your employer-sponsored health plan is undergoing an investigation, especially for small and medium sized employers with limited time, resources and/or access to professional assistance.

www.dahu.org

LONESTAR



On September 18, TABIP Lobbyists Mike and Shannon Meroney will be presenting a one-hour CE entitled "Health Care Hot Topics – 2023 Texas Legislative De-brief".

www.lonestarahuh.org

September Chapter Agendas

FORT WORTH



September 21, 2023

"Chicken N Pickle Vanguard Event and Meeting – the Calm Before the Storm -Don't Let 4th Quarter Put You in a Pickle."

www.fwahu.org

HOUSTON



NABIP Houston 43rd Annual Symposium

September 14, 2023 - 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Houston Museum of Natural Science
5555 Hermann Park Dr. Houston, TX 77030

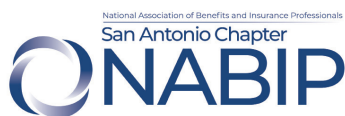
Tickets

\$85.00 Member Ticket
\$75.00 Earlybird rate before August 31
\$105.00 Guest Ticket
\$95.00 Earlybird rate before August 31

\$3,000.00 Event Partner - Group Medical - Only 1 available
\$3,000.00 Event Partner - Individual/Medicare - Only 1 available
\$3,000.00 Event Partner - Ancillary - Only 1 available
\$3,000.00 Event Partner - TPA/HR/Payroll - Only 1 available
\$2,000.00 Platinum Sponsor
\$750.00 Exhibitor Booth Only - \$2,000.00 Lunch Sponsor - \$500.00
Gold Sponsor (no booth) - \$5.00 Raffle Ticket - \$75.00 Additional Ticket
for Sponsors (Symposium)

www.habip-htx.org

SAN ANTONIO



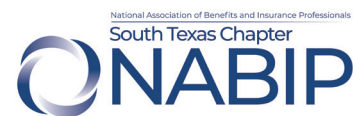
September 21, 2023
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Canyon Springs Golf Club
24405 Wilderness Oak
San Antonio, TX 78260

Please join us for our biggest NABIP-San Antonio Annual Char-ity Fundraising Golf Tournament!

www.sanantionioahu.org

SOUTH TEXAS



NABIP-SOTX 2023 Summit

September 14/15, 2023 - Marriott Courtyard - South Padre Island.

Join us for our Medicare & Employee Benefits Summit where you can pick up 5 hours of CE credits and learn about your industry. This event cost \$45 to NABIP-SOTX (also NABIP-TX) members and \$85 for non-members.

Here you will enjoy: • 5-CE credits • Hear from industry leaders • Enjoy some great drink and food • Set sail on the SPI Sunset Bay Cruise • Listen to local bands • Enjoy Fire-works • 2 Happy Hour Mixers • Meet Carrier Representatives
• Fishing Tournament (extra event) and, spend the weekend with your toes in the water and a cold one in your hand!

www.nabipsotx.org

AGENDA

*NABIP-SOTX 2023 INTERACTIVE
BUSINESS & INSURANCE
PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT*

*SOUTH PADRE ISLAND
SEPTEMBER 14/15, 2023*

MARRIOTT COURTYARD

Registration
\$45 Members
\$85 NonMembers
*(covers Summit meals
& Boat Cruise*

CE Credits COMPLEMENTARY)
(\$45 Any NABIP Member)

Thursday - 9/14/23

Sunset Bay Cruise - 6:00 PM
Post Cruise Happy Hour - 8:00 PM

Friday 9/15/23

Registration - 7:30 AM
Vendor Booths Open- 7:30 AM
Welcome - 8:00 AM
CE - MAPD and Part D Final Rule - 8:50 AM
BenefitMall - 9:40 AM
CE - Ethics vs Morals - 9:40 AM
Ambetter/Wellcare - 10:35 AM
Vendor Visits - 10:40 AM
CEC Vision - 11:00 AM

CE - MSA Plans Hey, It's Like a Medicare HSA - 11:10 AM

CE 2023 TX Legislation Updates Health Care - 1:15 PM

Lunch - 12:00 PM
Awards - 12:45 PM
Volleyball - 2:05 PM
Vendor Visits / Ice Cream Break - 2:30 PM
WellMed - 3:00 PM
Group CE - 3:05 PM
Wrap Up & Door Prizes - 4:00 PM
Music & Fireworks 7:00 PM
Agenda Subject to Changes

Post Summit Happy Hour / Food & Drinks / Music & Fireworks 7:00 PM

Saturday 9/16/23

Fishing Event - Breakaway Cruise - Boat Sails at 8AM
\$25 - Advance sales is on the Summit registration form

HOTEL - Code: Summit23

MARRIOTT COURTYARD

\$180 Single

\$200 Double Suite *(Shareable)*

956-433-0590

Register: **www.nabipsotx.org**

download the guide and use the online links

and objections.

The case will be presented (or prosecuted) by twelve House Managers and their hired lawyers, including Texas legends Dick DeGuerin and Rusty Hardin. The case will be defended by Attorney General Paxton's hired lawyers, including the high-profile lawyer Tony Buzbee, who recently announced he would run for Houston City Council.

Paxton has said he will not testify at the trial. Although the House Managers may try compel him to take the stand, but can't force him to testify. House Managers have not said publicly who they plan to call to testify, but a list of several dozen potential witnesses has been leaked to media outlets. We anticipate testimony from several of the whistleblowers (former top lieutenants who reported directly to Paxton and made their allegations to the FBI), or Paxton's former personal assistant who once revered the Attorney General as his political hero.

Most of the allegations are tied to former Austin real estate mogul Nate Paul who was under federal investigation, and has since been charged with lying to lenders about his finances. Paul apparently wielded outsized influence over Paxton, enough for his top staff members to repeatedly warn their boss that he was in grave danger of breaking the law to help Paul.

Paxton's legal team has said there is no evidence to support impeachment, attempting to dismiss or invalidate those articles. Texas House impeachment managers submitted nearly 4,000 pages of exhibits providing new and exhaustive details of their allegations of abuse of office.

Now, with the clock ticking toward the trial, far-right friends are fighting hard and spending big to protect their most important ally — and to stave off a major loss amid their ongoing fight for control of the Texas GOP. Defend Texas Liberty, a political action committee that has donated millions of dollars to far-right candidates in the state, has issued threats to fellow Republicans with primary challenges if they voted to impeach or convict. The Defend Texas Liberty PAC is a key part of the mix of political campaigns, institutions and dark-money groups that a trio of West Texas oil tycoons — Tim Dunn and brothers Farris and Dan Wilks — have pumped small fortunes into as part of a long-term crusade to push Texas to the extreme right.

And amid increased Republican rumors that he's about to resign to try to avoid testifying in his upcoming impeachment trial, Paxton pushed back last weekend and proclaimed he would "never stop fighting for the people of Texas and defending our conservative values."

Finally, ex-Governor Rick Perry infuriated Paxton supporters on the right with an opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal that Texans deserve a full airing of allegations in the Senate trial.

If you are curious (and bored), you can read all the legal filings and evidence submitted to the court (Senate) by both House Managers and lawyers for Paxton. If you want to watch the proceedings online, you can click on the Senate livestream. If you want to attend in person, you'll need a ticket to enter the Senate chamber's gallery. Tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis each day for the morning and after-noon sessions.

Stay tuned and we'll keep you informed along the way.

Thanks to our NABIP-TX Sponsors

Click on each logo to visit their website

