

Subj: **Breakfast Bits from IIAM Week of 3-1-2010**
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March 1, 2010

DON'T FORGET TO FORWARD THIS TO YOUR STAFF!

Issue: 30



This Week:

March 1-Principles of Insurance AAI81B
National Legislative Conference & Convention March 3-6, 2010
National Board Meeting March 5-6, 2010

[Why should agents attend the Legislative Conference?](#)

Track new legislation on our [2010 Legislative Bulletin](#)

[Click here](#) for your March/April 'Maryland Messenger'

Special Flood/COBRA Alert:

The NFIP program faces yet another pending expiration on Feb. 28. Also facing expiration at midnight on Feb. 28th are extensions of unemployment insurance, COBRA health care benefits, highway

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IIAM Education Programs

funding, small-business loans and funding for satellite television viewing. The flood program faced expiration four times in 2009, and received four short term extensions.

At this writing there has been a glitch in the Senate and prospects for an extension have stalled. Even if problems are worked out, it may not be until March 2nd until a vote may be taken. Unfortunately, in this scenario both the flood insurance program and the COBRA benefits will expire for approximately 36-48 hours.

In anticipation of a potential expiration of the flood program for a short time, FEMA issued a bulletin advising agents and consumers on what to do if the program is allowed to expire. They specifically state that, should the program be allowed to expire, "the program will not be allowed to operate and you are to be guided by Bulletin W-09068, issued October 27, 2009, and titled 'Recommendations/Guidance for Possible NFIP Authority Lapse and Hiatus'. [Click here for the bulletin!](#)

Legislative Update:

HB249/SB236: SB236 passed out of the Senate Finance Committee and through the Senate with a vote 47-0. The House Bill 249 passed the House Economics Committee and passed the full House on February 25th with a vote of 135-0.

Other Bills...Watch List!

[HB317:](#) Would allow MAIF to accept premium payments on an installment basis.

[HB492:](#) Would increase PIP minimum to \$50,000.

[HB526:](#) Would increase minimum financial responsibility requirements for the payment of specified claims for bodily injury or death or for the damage or destruction of the property of others for a motor vehicle owned by an individual who has been convicted of, or granted probation for, specified alcohol-related driving offenses.

[HB708:](#) Would prohibit an insurer, with respect to private passenger motor vehicle insurance, from rating a risk based, in whole or in part, on the credit history of an applicant or insured in any manner; repealing provisions of law authorizing an insurer to use the credit history of an applicant or insured to rate a new policy of private passenger motor vehicle insurance.

[HB825:](#) Would increase the minimum financial responsibility requirements from \$20,000 to \$30,000 for one person and from \$40,000 to \$60,000 for two or more persons.

[HB840:](#) Would require that an insurer offer to provide ordinance or law coverage for increased costs of repair or construction incurred in order to comply with local, state, or federal laws or ordinances; and establishing a minimum coverage amount for ordinance or law coverage.

[HB1008:](#) Would rename the Injured Workers' Insurance Fund as the Chesapeake Employers' Mutual Insurance Company. Crossfiled with SB507.

[HB1088:](#) Would require insurers to offer in writing, at the time of application and renewal, to provide coverage for loss that is caused by or results from a discharge of water from a specified system (on or off premises, including 'water main breaks'). Crossfiled with SB906.



UPCOMING SEMINARS:

SEATS AVAILABLE!!

Errors & Omissions Loss Control-March 9

Misc. Personal Lines, Salisbury-March 22

Ethics-March 23

CRIS-Commercial Automobile-March 24

Homeowners-March 25

For an entire listing of our programs for the remainder of the year, [click here!](#)

Legislative Session Activity



Keep track of the bills that impact you and your business. The IIAM Legislative Bulletin is online and all bills may be viewed or saved from that site. Don't wait until the session is over. Check in regularly to see the bills and what the IIAM Legislative Committee is doing.

[Click here to visit IIAM's Legislative Bulletin](#)

SAMUEL C. HOFF AGENCY EARNS RECOGNITION

HUNTINGDON, PA - Samuel C. Hoff Agency, an independent insurance agency located in Westminster, Maryland, has been awarded Inner Circle honors for 2009 by Mutual Benefit Group, a multiline property and casualty insurance company based in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.

This is the first time Samuel C. Hoff Agency has qualified for the award, an honor that Mutual Benefit presents annually to acknowledge outstanding agent performance, recognizing those who have established a consistent record of profitable growth along with superior customer satisfaction. The agency is one of only nine among Mutual Benefit's agency force to achieve Inner Circle status for 2009.

Mutual Benefit Group markets its insurance coverage through a network of more than 250 independent agents in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Big "I" Expresses Concern Over House Passage Of Antitrust Repeal For Health Insurers

Association applauds decision to remove medical liability from repeal.

The Big "I" expressed concern over House passage of H.R. 4626, the "Health Insurance Industry Fair Competition Act." This legislation would repeal the McCarran-Ferguson antitrust exemption for health insurers.

The Big "I" strongly believes that the limited antitrust exemption for insurers provides the ability for small and midsized insurers to accurately price risk, thereby enabling them to compete against each other and large insurers for the benefit of consumers. A Congressional Research Service (CRS) report recently confirmed the pro-competitive nature of the McCarran-Ferguson antitrust provisions, stating that efforts to further limit the McCarran-Ferguson antitrust provisions could lead to less competition, undercutting the fundamental purpose of the federal antitrust laws.

"The Big 'I' is concerned that, at a time when small businesses across the country are struggling with skyrocketing health care costs, Congress is sidetracked on legislation that will do nothing to contain these costs or bend the cost curve," says Charles Symington, Big "I" senior vice president of government affairs.

However, the Big "I" does commend the House decision to strip the repeal of the antitrust exemptions for medical liability. As originally drafted in the larger health reform bill, the repeal also included medical professional liability insurers. Medical malpractice insurance is a property/casualty insurance liability product, underwritten by property/casualty companies for medical professionals and facilities. The Big "I" and other property/casualty

(P/C) and business associations recently sent a joint letter to all 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives expressing strong opposition to including medical malpractice insurance in efforts to amend or repeal the McCarran-Ferguson Act.

"While still having concerns with the legislation, the Big 'I' is grateful that the House recognized that medical malpractice insurance is a property/casualty product and should not be included in any repeal," says John Prible, Big "I" vice president of federal government affairs. "Including medical liability insurers in the bill would, in an ironic twist, actually increase health care costs by limiting the competition in the medical liability market and making coverage more expensive for health care professionals."

ACSR Tribute Day



February 24, 2010

ACSR Tribute Day was a huge success!. Angela Openshaw, ACSR, CIC, CRM, from HMS Insurance Associates was named ACSR of the Year 2009. Angela has worked for HMS since 2004. She is a Commercial Lines Account Manager. Joining Angela were the 2006 and 2008 recipients, Janet Fritz, ACSR and Christina Robinson, ACSR, AAI.

Vince Phillips of Phillips & Associates provided a three hour 'Hot Buttons' approved continuing education seminar for the ACSRs. The session was followed by a luncheon. The event was held at the Crowne Plaza in Timonium.

With the turnout and the positive responses, it looks like IIAM has another annual event to look forward to.

For information on any of our programs, including ACSR contact, Rebekah Langford, Education Director at iiambecka@aol.com.

Maryland 'I' Day-April 13, 2010

Time: Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.
 Place: Conference Center at the Maritime Institute
 692 Maritime Boulevard
 Linthicum Heights, MD. 21090
 Cost: \$99.00 (Member of IIAM)

\$125.00 (Non-Member)
\$80.00 (Retiree)
C.E. Six (6) hours

Registration must be done online. You may pay by check, but still must register online. [Click here to register.](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**IIAM'S 73RD ANNUAL INSTALLATION
DINNER-'BULL ROAST & CASINO NIGHT'**

**JUNE 11, 2010
The Turf Valley Resort**

[Click here for information & to Register!](#)

Shelley Arnold, CPCU, AU, ARM, AAI, ACSR
Independent Insurance Agents of MD

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