SB 322

Raising the Medicaid Asset Limit for People with Disabilities

- SB 322, sponsored by Senator Tom Dempsey (R- St. Charles County), raises the asset limit for people who qualify for Medicaid based upon disability from $999 for individuals and $2,000 for couples to $5,000 and $10,000.
  - The increase is phased in over five years, beginning fiscal year 2016 with the full increase effective fiscal year 2019, and annual cost of living adjustments thereafter.
  - The bill also excludes medical savings accounts (MSAs) and independent living accounts up to $5,000 from the asset calculation.
    - MSAs can be used to pay for medical care.
    - Independent Living Accounts are authorized by the Ticket to Work Health Assure Program (TTW) and money in these accounts can be used to pay for disability related expenses.
- SB 322 helps people with disabilities by allowing them to qualify for Medicaid and retain some of their savings to help with expenses like education, home repairs, automobile costs, and other unexpected expenses.
  - Already, children and low-income parents have no Medicaid asset limit, only their income is considered and not their savings.
  - The elderly, like those who qualify based on disability, now have an asset limit of $999 for individuals and $2,000 for couples. People who qualify because of blindness have an asset limit of $2,000 per individual and $4,000 per couple.
    - Many people expect this bill to be amended to include the elderly and those who are blind.

The Senate may vote on this bill as early as the week of March 31.

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