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Bills Flying, Dying as Session Ends

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By **HEALTH NEWS FLORIDA STAFF**

There's a flurry of health policy activity as Florida's 2014 Legislature comes to an end tonight.

On Thursday, the Senate didn't budge on its ongoing opposition to giving nurse practitioners more authority.

The House proposals were stripped from the omnibus health bill (SB 7113)

Thursday, the *News Service of Florida* reports. The same flurry of amendments also deleted broad provisions in a telemedicine bill, allowing out-of-state physicians the ability to practice without a Florida license.



Trauma centers fared better. The Senate backed an amendment that keeps three HCA Healthcare-owned facilities open, despite objections for older, urban trauma centers, the *News Service* reports. Sen. Denise Grimsley, R-Sebring, proposed that an advisory committee review the trauma center issue and submit recommendations to Legislative leaders by Feb. 1, the *Florida Current* reports.

A final Senate vote on the omnibus health bill comes today. The House would then need to vote on the revised omnibus package before the gavel lands tonight.

Other bills seeing action Thursday included the infamous "stand-your-ground" law. The Senate rejected proposed changes that would have prevented people starting an altercation or seeking revenge from using it as a legal defense, according to the *Associated Press*.

Local health projects also appeared to be crossing the finish line, in this a surplus year for state revenue. The Tampa Bay area may see a \$20 million boost to programs at University of South Florida Health, and \$2 million for a "pediatric research zone" at St. Petersburg's All Children's Hospital, the *Tampa Bay Times* reports (*paywall alert*).

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In Manatee County, the Manatee Glens Mental Health & Addictions Specialty Hospital is on track for \$750,000, to create a community action treatment team for emotionally disturbed children in the area, according to the [Bradenton Herald](#).

An issue lawmakers never seriously considered during session – Medicaid expansion - will continue its symbolic presence on the session's last day. PICO United Florida, a faith-based group, is adding the names of Floridians without insurance to white handkerchiefs at the Capitol, The [Lakeland Ledger](#) reports. The handkerchiefs are typically dropped to the floor to symbolize the end of a legislative session.

TAGS: [trauma centers](#) [nurse practitioners](#) [telemedicine](#) [stand your ground law](#) [Florida Legislature](#)

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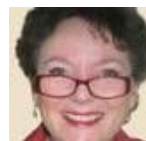


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