

Press Coverage | March 14, 2022

# Law Shortening SOL on Medical Debt in Virginia One Step From Governor's Desk

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Virginia Bell Flynn

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Virginia Bell Flynn, a partner in Troutman Pepper's Consumer Financial Services Practice Group, was quoted in the March 14 *AccountsRecovery.net Compliance Digest* article, "[Law Shortening SOL on Medical Debt in Virginia One Step From Governor's Desk](#)."

Virginia's House of Delegates and Senate have passed a bill that would shorten the statute of limitations for actions on contracts for health care services to three years, two years fewer than the standard statute of limitations for written contracts. The proposed legislation, H.B. 573, amends Va. Code §§ 8.01-246 and -249 and would apply to any health care services contract action, including those brought by the Commonwealth. For actions on contracts between a patient and a provider, the statute of limitations would begin to run 30 days from the date the patient is invoiced or 30 days after default on an agreed payment plan. The bill is slated for one more procedural vote in the House of Delegates before it can be sent to the Governor's desk.

The bill's sponsor aims to provide consumers with greater peace of mind by minimizing unexpected litigation on forgotten debts, consistent with other pro-consumer efforts by the Virginia legislature to limit balance-billing in recent years. If enacted, the bill's July 1, 2022 effective date will likely lead to a surge in collections litigation in the short term. In the long term, however, it is unclear whether its net effect will help consumers avoid litigation or simply force them into court sooner.

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