

3:01 am, December 10, 2007

EDITORIAL

Don't rush bills on account of the Blues

Another area where some stepping back would be in order is House Bills 5282 and 5283, which set new rules for health insurance policies for individuals.

The Blue Cross/Blue Shield-backed bills sailed through the state House of Representatives in October but have since faced rapidly accumulating opposition (*See story, Page 1*).

The bills appear to be designed to treat the Blues like a private insurer without the Blues having to give up nonprofit status. While it is true the Blues are required to serve as the insurer of last resort, it is also true they are compensated at least in part for that by not having to pay taxes.

Understanding the true import of the bills is important — the need for individual health coverage is growing — and the Senate needs to spend time making sure that it does.

We believe part of that process should be a thorough review of the Blues' finances to determine if there is, in fact, a problem. Then it can be determined if changes in the law need to be made.