

WSLHA Board Report

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With only a little over a week to go in the regular session, legislators have concluded their work on passing bills from the opposite chamber. They are now focused on concurrence votes, essentially agreeing to, or refusing to agree, to amendments that the opposite chamber put on their bills. Bills that are “necessary to implement the budget” were not subject to the 4/15 cutoff deadline and remain alive. The regular session is scheduled to end on April 26th.

Budget negotiations stalled this week, with the Senate insisting that the House pass its revenue package before budget negotiations continue. Thus, it is likely that the Legislature will be called into special session to conclude its budget work. The Governor has the authority to call legislators back for 30-day special sessions. Whether the Legislature would need 30 days, or more than 30 days, is anyone’s guess.

Below is our tracking list for the legislative session. I’ve included only the higher priority bills I have tracked this session. The highlighted bills are still alive.

Bill #	Abbrev. Title	Short Description	Status	Comments
SHB 1135	Health profession rem. plans	Concerning remediation plans for licensed health and health-related professions to resolve eligible complaints of unprofessional conduct.	S Health Care	This was DOH-request legislation. This bill died in committee. Its companion bill, SB 5754, also died in committee.
HB 1339	Scope of practice/healthcare	Allowing the secretary of health to intercede and stay any decision of a disciplining authority that expands scope of practice.	S Rules 2	This bill died in Senate Rules.
HB 1340	Health care professionals	Developing a process to allow pilot programs for health care professionals to learn new skills or roles, use existing skills in new circumstances, and accelerate training.	H Approps	This bill died in House Appropriations.
HB 1365	Autism & developmental delays	Requiring universal screening and provider payment for autism and developmental delays for children in medicaid programs.	H Approps	While this bill, and its companion SB 5317, both died in committee, the House and Senate proposed budgets include funding for these screenings.
HB 1367	Patients w/ developmental disability	Requiring the student achievement council to develop a grant program to encourage training for students studying in the medical field to work with individuals with disabilities.	H Approps	This bill died in House Appropriations. The companion bill, SB 5642, also died in committee.
E2SHB	Health insurance	Mitigating barriers to patient	S Passed	This is our Regence/Care Core

1471 (SB 5560)	contracting	access to care resulting from health insurance contracting practices.	3rd	bill. The adopted bill will require transparency in the prior authorization and medical necessity processes; payers will not be able to require therapy providers to discount services not covered by the payer's health plan; medical necessity reviews will be done by the same or similar provider; a payer cannot require prior authorization for an evaluation and management visit or an initial treatment visit; and "new episode of care" is defined as treatment for a new or recurrent condition for which the patient has not been treated by the provider within the previous 90 days.
HB 1854	Certif'd instructional staff	Creating a new salary model for certificated instructional staff.	H Education	I testified with concerns on this bill, as did WEA. No action was ever taken on the bill.
HB 2224	Excise tax system	Investing in education and essential public services by modifying and improving the fairness of Washington's excise tax system by enacting an excise tax on capital gains, narrowing or eliminating tax preferences, reinstating a previously expired business and occupation surtax while increasing the small business tax credit, and implementing marketplace fairness in Washington.	H Finance	This is the House Democrats tax package providing new revenue for the state budget. It includes a capital gains tax, an increase in the B&O tax, and the closing of certain targeted tax preferences. This bill may not be the final vehicle for the House Democrats' tax package, as there have been several "title-only" bills introduced in the last week. These title-only bills have no actual bill language at this point.
ESSB 5084	All payer claims database	Modifying the all payer claims database to improve health care quality and cost transparency by changing provisions related to definitions regarding data, reporting and pricing of products, responsibilities of the office of financial management and the lead organization, submission to the database, and parameters for release of information.	S Passed FP	This bill requires all payers in the state including Medicaid, PEBB, L&I, and all health carriers doing business in Washington to submit their claims data to a state database. This bill has passed the Legislature.
SSB 5175 (HB 1403)	Telemedicine	Regarding telemedicine.	Del to Gov	This bill provides for reimbursement for services rendered through telemedicine. This bill has passed the

				Legislature.
SSB 5418	Cat. injured workers	Creating a pilot program to improve care for catastrophically injured workers.	H Approps	This bill would have directed the state to contract with a specific vendor to treat catastrophically injured workers. WSHLA members had concerns about this bill. It died in House Appropriations.
SSB 5488	Applied behavior analysis	Concerning applied behavior analysis.	H Spkr Signed	I testified throughout the session on this bill, commenting that the proponents included our suggested language giving protections to SLPs and removing communication disorders from the ABA scope of practice. This bill has passed the Legislature.
SB 5986	Telemedicine, board of	Creating the board of telemedicine.	S Health Care	Sen. Becker, chair of Senate Health Care, is the sponsor of this bill. While the bill died in committee, she is interested in pursuing this issue next session.
SSB 6088	K-12 education enhancements	Making K-12 education enhancements.	H Approps	This bill makes changes to I-1351 by removing the class size reductions in grades higher than grade 3. There is a referendum clause that would send this back to the voters this fall.
SB 6102	Capital gains excise tax	Enacting an excise tax on capital gains to improve the fairness of Washington's tax system and provide funding for the education legacy trust account.	S Ways & Means	This is the Senate Democrats' proposal to fund education spending with a capital gains tax. It is being heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on 4/20.
SB 6103	Basic education funding	Providing basic education funding.	S Ways & Means	This is a bill from the Senate Democrats dealing with the McCleary finding that K-12 spending is reliant too much on local levy dollars. This bill changes the local levy requirements such that the state has the burden. This bill was heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on 4/17.
SB 6104	Education financing	Improving education financing.	S Ways & Means	This is another Senate Democratic proposal to deal with

				<p>K-12 employee compensation and reducing reliance on local levies.</p> <p>It is being heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on 4/20.</p>
<p>SB 6109</p>	<p>Basic educ reqs compliance</p>	<p>Concerning compliance with constitutional basic education requirements.</p>	<p>S Ways & Means</p>	<p>This bill comes from the Senate Republicans. It also reduces the reliance on local levy dollars for basic education funding. It also creates a School Employee Benefit Board that would take over the health insurance procurement for school employees, thus removing this element from collective bargaining. TRI contracts are also eliminated.</p> <p>This bill was heard in the Senate Ways & Means Committee on 4/17.</p>