

WSLHA Priorities

Great news! [HB 1589](#), **our fair contracting bill**, was voted out of the House on a 73-23 vote. It now goes to the Senate for consideration. You can view the floor debate on HB 1589 [here](#). Thanks to all of you who contacted your representatives on HB 1589!

Health Care Bills of Interest

[HB 1392](#) creates the Medicaid Access Program to **increase Medicaid reimbursement rates** to the Medicare rate as of December 31, 2024. It is out of the Rules Committee and eligible for a vote by the House.

[HB 1686](#), the bill creating a **health care entity registry**, is out of the Rules Committee and is eligible for a House vote. There is an amendment that narrows the bill considerably. Now, the bill only requires the Department of Health (DOH), in consultation with others, to develop a plan and recommendations regarding the creation of a complete and interactive registry.

[SB 5387](#), the **corporate practice of health care** bill, is still in the Rules Committee. OIC has requested a change to the exemption for HMOs and health care service contractors organized as integrated care delivery systems by adding "limited" to health care service contractors.

General News

The Legislature has reached the midpoint of its 2025 session, with lawmakers working long hours on the floor and in caucus as they approach the March 12th deadline for bills to pass out of their chambers of origin. As of this week, 1051 House Bills have been introduced, and 519 have made it to the Rules Committee for further consideration. In the Senate, 805 bills have been introduced, with 271 entering the Senate Rules process. Bills that do not clear this stage of Rules committee pulls and floor action — unless deemed "necessary to implement the budget" (NTIB) — are generally considered dead for the session. However, it's worth noting that no bill is entirely off the table until the biennium ends.

The first half of floor action typically features bills that the majority anticipates will inspire less debate and those laden with time-consuming amendments are saved until closer to March 12th when debate can be limited. This has proved true this year with the House working into the early morning on both Saturday and Sunday. The Senate, with fewer bills, has been adjourning every day around 4 pm and did not work this weekend.

On the heels of Governor Ferguson's budget cut exercise last week, another effort in the budget and revenue space launched Monday. [People for an Affordable Washington](#), a new PAC, placed a banner ad on the Seattle Times website, highlighting talking points that criticize increased government spending without seeing progress on education, homelessness, housing affordability, or the rising cost of living. Funded by the Washington Alliance for a Competitive Economy, Microsoft, Madrona, T-Mobile, and Alaska Air, the website also features a place for readers to contact their legislators.

These companies could be concerned about [HB 1839](#) which would remove the current cap on the Business & Occupation (B&O) tax for large technology companies to increase funding for higher education. Currently, the B&O tax is capped at \$9.6 million per year for any single company. By eliminating this cap, the state aims to generate additional revenue to support public universities and colleges. Proponents argue that large tech firms, which have seen substantial growth and profits, should contribute more to the state's educational infrastructure. Opponents, however, express concerns that this change could discourage business investment and lead to higher consumer prices. The bill is considered NTIB.

The next **revenue and caseload forecasts** will be released on March 18th. This will set the stage for the House and Senate Democrats to release their budget proposals soon thereafter.