

## Capitol News

January 30, 2018

### Melissa Johnson, WSLHA Lobbyist

With one more week to go before the policy committee cutoff on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, committees are racing the clock to vote bills out of committee. Generally, bills that are not voted out by then are considered "dead" and will not be considered further this session. The fiscal committee cutoff is on February 6<sup>th</sup>, where bills with a fiscal impact to the state budget must be voted out of the fiscal committees. There is an exception for bills deemed "necessary to implement the budget." Those bills are not subject to any cutoff and can be considered until the Legislature adjourns. All bills must be voted out of their "house of origin" by February 14<sup>th</sup>.

Budget proposals from the House and Senate are expected soon after February 15<sup>th</sup>, when the state's revenue forecast will be released.

SB 6157, our prior authorization legislation, will be heard on Tuesday. We have a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, and a patient lined up to testify about the barriers that prior authorization places on access to care. Once the hearing is over, we will work hard to get this bill voted out of the Senate Health Care Committee by Friday's cutoff deadline.

Last week, the fiscal committees heard the various bills on the School Employee Benefit Board (SEBB). You'll recall that last session's McCleary legislation, HB 2242, made changes to how school employees will receive their health care and other benefits. Here's a breakdown of the bills:

- HB 2438/SB 6241: This is the Health Care Authority's request legislation. It makes technical corrections, adds charter schools to SEBB coverage, and creates fiscal accounts.
- HB 2655/SB 6286: This bill adds representatives from the Washington State School Directors Association and the Washington School Administrators Association to the SEBB.
- HB 2655/6286: This is the SEBB bill supported by WEA:
- Requires that full implementation of SEBB be contingent upon a monthly funding rate that is equivalent to PEBB rates
- Allows districts to offer health benefit coverage to individuals working less than 630 hours through SEBB as a local enrichment
- Increases the representatives for certificated and classified staff groups from two to three members
- Allows districts to offer additional optional benefits at local discretion
- HB 2755/SB 6461: This bill allows larger school districts and ESDs to be exempt from providing coverage through the SEBB if the benefits are similar in scope and cost to those offered under SEBB.