

## **Capitol News**

**January 9, 2017**

**Melissa Johnson, WSLHA Lobbyist**

The 2017 legislative session convenes today for its 105-day session. It will prove to be a contentious one, with legislators focused on K-12 education funding, how to fund it (new revenue or not), how much to fund it, and for what services. As the session begins, there is no consensus among Democrats and Republicans on this issue.

This week, most committees will focus on orienting legislators during work sessions. On Tuesday, the House Health Care Committee will hold a work session on the state's Transformation Waiver and public health funding. Also on Tuesday, the Senate Health Care Committee will hold a work session on the Department of Health. On Friday, the House Health Care Committee will hold a work session on the Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

Also this week, the fiscal committees will hold hearings on the Governor's budget. This session, WSLHA will be focusing on a bill to help our school-based SLPs and audiologists by allowing credit for all non-school experience to count on the school salary schedule. Currently, an SLP or audiologist can only count two years of non-school experience (all school experience is counted). This salary credit is critical for those transitioning to a school-based practice from a private practice or hospital setting.