

## Capitol News

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With just three weeks to go in the legislative session, the pace at the Legislature is increasing even more. This week's "house of origin" cutoff deadline (House bills out of the House; Senate bills out of the Senate) significantly shortened the list of bills still alive for consideration by lawmakers. But there is the exception for bills deemed "necessary to implement the budget" or NTIB. NTIB bills are not subject to any cutoff and remain alive until the Legislature adjourns.

[SB 6157](#), the prior authorization bill, passed the Senate last week and is scheduled for a hearing in the House Health Care Committee on Tuesday. It must pass out of committee by Friday to remain alive. It had a strong, almost-unanimous, vote out of the Senate.

[SB 6157](#) was amended on the Senate floor to allow six visits before prior authorization can be required. This is down from the eight visit limit as the bill passed the Senate Health Care Committee. While it's true that many providers receive the six visit waiver from Evicore now, that six visit waiver can be rescinded at any time. Remember that current law only allows the initial evaluation visit before prior authorization can be imposed. SB 6157 puts this six visit limit into law.

Committee meetings resumed this week, and bills have until February 23rd to be voted out of their policy committee. The fiscal committee cutoff is just a few days after that on February 26th. And bills must pass the opposite house (House bills out of the Senate; Senate bills out of the House) by March 2nd. The legislative session is scheduled to end on March 8th.

The state revenue forecast was released Thursday and was good news. It showed \$647 million additional revenue for the rest of the 17-19 biennium, and \$671 million additional revenue for the 19-21 biennium. This forecast gives budget writers the latest revenue collection projections to finalize the House and Senate supplemental budgets this weekend.

The Senate supplemental budget will be released on Monday, the House supplemental budget on Tuesday. Both budgets will have public hearings on Tuesday, with the goal of passing both bills out of their respective chambers by next Friday. Once that happens, negotiations between the House and Senate will begin so that a final budget agreement can be reached in time to adjourn on March 8th.