

Capitol News

April 7, 2019

Melissa Johnson, WSLHA Lobbyist

SB 5887, our prior authorization bill, **was voted unanimously** out of the House Health Care & Wellness Committee last Tuesday. It is now in the Rules Committee, the last stop before a vote by the House.

The **music therapy bill, SB 5485**, was voted out of the House Health Care Committee last Tuesday. The committee adopted WSLHA's amendment that would require a music therapist to collaborate and review the music therapist's treatment plan with an SLP or audiologist, for clients diagnosed with a communication disorder. WSLHA will be seeking an additional amendment that would prohibit music therapists from treating communication disorders.

With **only three weeks to go in the legislative session**, lawmakers are feeling the pressure to get their work done on time. The policy committee cutoff deadline has come and gone (last Wednesday), and the fiscal committee cutoff is right around the corner (next Tuesday).

To meet the opposite house cutoff deadline on April 17th, when House bills must be out of the Senate and Senate bills out of the House, legislators will conduct full-time floor action starting Wednesday. Bills that pass both chambers, but in different forms, must be reconciled such that each chamber passes the same version. This is done between April 17th and the last day of the session, April 28th. Of course, bills that are necessary to implement the budget (NTIB) are not subject to cutoff deadlines.

Last week was focused on the **Senate budget**, which passed the Senate on Thursday. Three Republicans joined Democrats in voting for the budget. Now that both chambers have approved their own versions, negotiations between the House and Senate will continue in earnest.