Capitol News

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The 2020 legislative session got off to a fast and furious start, as is typical for a short, 60-day session. Lawmakers also made history on the first day by electing Rep. Laurie Jinkins as the state’s first woman, and openly gay, Speaker of the House. And while short sessions are supposed to be “clean up” sessions to address bills that didn’t pass in the previous session, hundreds of new bills have been introduced in the first week alone.

Today, the House Education Committee will hear HB 2012, the bill providing bonuses to SLPs and audiologists working in the schools (and other ESA categories) who achieve national certification. Paul Diaz, immediate past president of WSLHA, will be testifying in support of this important legislation.

Exciting news about our prior authorization bill, SB 5887…it was voted out of the Senate last Wednesday, virtually unanimously! This is the bill from last session that clarifies when a patient in entitled to up to six visits of rehabilitation, including SLP and audiology services, before prior authorization is imposed. The bill now goes to the House for consideration.

And our health care benefit manager bills, HB 1562 and SB 5601, are scheduled for hearings on January 21st and January 27th respectively. These are the bills that require a health care benefit manager (think eviCore) to be licensed by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner.