

## Lobbyist Report

Month March



### Meetings/Work groups attended

March 2 - Rep. Klicker

March 4 - Washington Telehealth Collaborative Meeting

March 4 - Connection Washington Coalition Meeting

March 4 - O2G Meeting

March 4 - Wednesday Night Study Group

March 9 - Behavioral Health Coalition Meeting

March 10 - Rep. Ybarra

March 11 - WMHCA Lobby Day

- Sen. Randall
- Rep. Blake
- Rep. Lovick
- Rep. Pollet
- Rep. Caldier
- Rep. Springer
- Rep. Valdez
- Rep. Cody
- Rep. Walen
- Rep. Simmons
- Rep. Harris
- Rep. Ramel
- Rep. Kraft

March 18 - O2G Meeting

March 18 - Wednesday Night Study Group

### Legislative Summary for Mental Health Specifically (To Send to Members)

The highlight for March was our virtual "Day on the Hill". We had many successful meetings with a variety of legislators where we discussed the issues most important to WMHCA. The day was packed with meetings and there were a lot of very insightful conversations. Thank you to all that

participated! This type of meetings are so important as we are able to share what we are supporting (or not supporting) with the legislators who are working on these pieces of legislation. The budget was released and there is a lot of allocated funds to support Mental Health programs and issues. This goes to show that the legislature is serious about behavioral health and it was wonderful to see how much they would like to do. Here is a current status of bills we are supporting:

Bill Number	Short Title	Sponsor	Bill Status
1007	Concerning the completion of supervised experience through distance supervision	Klippert	<b>Needs Governor Signature</b>
1054	Establishing requirements for tactics and equipment used by peace officers.	Johnson	Senate passed
1063	Allowing additional renewals for behavioral health professional trainee and associate credentials	Harris	Passed House
1074	Concerning overdose and suicide fatality reviews	Peterson	<b>Needs Governor Signature</b>
1078	Restoring voter eligibility for all persons convicted of a felony offense who are not in total confinement under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections	Simmons	<b>Needs Governor Signature</b>
1086	Creating the state office of behavioral health consumer advocacy	Simmons	Passed senate
1196	Relating to audio-only telemedicine.	Riccelli	S-Rules
1477	Relating to statewide enhancement & expansion of behavioral health & suicide prevention crisis response services.	Orwall	S-Ways and Means - NTIB
1504	Workforce Education investment act	Chopp	S-Rules
5071	Creating transition teams to assist specified persons under civil commitment	Dhingra	H-Rules
5073	Concerning involuntary commitment	Dhingra	H-Rules
5229	Relating to health equity continuing education for health care professionals	Randall	Passed House
5325	Audio Only telemedicine	Muzzal	Passed House
5370	Mental Health Advance Directives	Keiser	H-Second Reading

### Meetings Requested

Right now no meetings are being requested. The legislature is mainly on the Floor, debating and passing bills and no meetings are available or needed.

### General Legislative News

There are just under 3 weeks left in this 2021 Regular Legislative Session. The House and Senate have released their proposed operating, capital and transportation budgets that will address spending for the remainder of the current fiscal biennium, and set the spending course for the upcoming 2-year fiscal period.

The operating budget is by far the largest budget of the three. The House plan proposes to appropriate upwards of \$58 billion over the next biennium while the Senate proposes to spend about \$59 billion over that same period. Both budgets assume revenues from a controversial capital gains tax that is expected to pass this year. They also allocate portions of the federal stimulus funding from the American Rescue Plan Act.

However, both bodies agree that some of those expected federal receipts must be held in reserve while the U.S. Treasury provides guidance on how the funds can be spent. That federal guidance process is expected to take several weeks -- which means that the legislature may not have a clear understanding of how they can allocate most of the more than \$4 billion of the federal funding total until after the close of the constitutionally defined Regular Legislative Session on April 25.

Some Olympia observers believe the legislature will hold back a substantial portion of the expected federal funding and return to Olympia later this year once the federal guidance is released. Others believe they will adopt a generous spending plan -- which both of these proposals represent -- and wait until next January to allocate the remainder of the federal funds through a supplemental budget process.

We believe it is too early to predict what they will do. There are still several major items of business that the majority wants to address, including the two major environmental proposals -- cap and invest, and a low-carbon fuels standard -- as well as a yet to be fully defined proposal on a multi-billion dollar transportation infrastructure package.

At this point of the session, every major issue gets tied to other issues. Vote-trading becomes the currency of the day and issues that seem wholly-unrelated become entwined in the final gambit to adjourn

What's on the Horizon?

We are in the final stretch as the 2021 session ends on April 25. For the moment, we just need to continue to watch bills and offer information and assistance when needed. After the conclusion of session, we can work on strategies for the interim.

Other things I've been tracking or paying attention to:

To be repetitive, we are following the bills listed above. I will keep you all updated on what is happening and I will let you know if we need to offer input, suggestions and help to legislators make their final decisions.

Sara Stewart