

# First Friday Forum: State Legislative Updates

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February 4, 2022

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# 2022 Legislative Session

**The state's legislative session for 2022 is in session until March 10th.**

- This is a “short session” in the biennial legislative cycle
- Legislature will consider a supplemental biennial budget for July 2021- June 2023
- Session is largely remote



# Legislative Atmosphere

**While the Legislature typically considers fewer substantive policy proposals in short sessions, this has been a busy session.**

- Ongoing pandemic and economic recovery
- Interest in refining major policy initiatives from past legislative sessions, such as behavioral health and long-term care
- Revenue forecast has increased by roughly \$4B since last session
- Rapidly shifting federal landscape, with pending “Build Back Better” package under discussion in Congress

# Hot Topics

**There have been hundreds of health & social service items proposed. Here are a few we're watching:**

Issue	Bill #	Description	More Info
Immigrant health equity	N/A - budget	Effort to fund health coverage regardless of immigration status by 2024, starting with low-income adults	<a href="http://www.waisn.org/health-equity-for-immigrants">www.waisn.org/health-equity-for-immigrants</a>
Medicare affordability	N/A - budget	Effort to expand programs that make Medicare more affordable for low-income people, including removing the asset test for Medicare Savings Programs	<a href="https://nohla.org/index.php/2021/06/16/medicare-cliff/">https://nohla.org/index.php/2021/06/16/medicare-cliff/</a>
Surprise medical bills	HB 1688/ SB 5618	Insurance Commissioner request to reinforce protections against surprise medical bills when people get needed care outside health plan provider network	<a href="http://www.insurance.wa.gov/legislative-priorities">www.insurance.wa.gov/legislative-priorities</a>

# Hot Topics, Continued...

Issue	Bill #	Description	More Info
Charity care	SB 1616	Attorney General request to expand hospital charity care requirements to 400% FPL (full charity care up to 200% FPL, plus discounts between 201-400% FPL)	<a href="http://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-rep-simmons-bill-will-provide-22-million-washingtonians-access-more">www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-rep-simmons-bill-will-provide-22-million-washingtonians-access-more</a>
Health care & housing	HB 1866	Expands supportive housing for Apple Health enrollees who are chronically unhoused	Known as “Apple Health and Homes”
Prescription drug costs	SB 5532	Creates a state prescription drug affordability board to oversee prescription drug price increases	Other Rx bills this session aim to improve cost-sharing affordability and require pharmacy translation
TANF Time Extension	HB 2048	Expands hardship exemptions to TANF time limits (continuing pandemic policy)	
Personal Needs Allowance	SB 5745	DSHS request to increase the Personal Needs Allowance to \$2,382 per month so people who receive in-home long term care services can keep enough income to pay for housing, food, and basic necessities	<a href="http://www.agingwashington.org/media/dynamic/files/317-04-2022-pna-one-pager.pdf">www.agingwashington.org/media/dynamic/files/317-04-2022-pna-one-pager.pdf</a>

# Hot Topics, Continued...

Issue	Bill #	Description	More Info
Long term care	HB 1732, HB 1733	Refines WA Cares Fund, the state's new long-term care program, and also delay the start until July 2023	<a href="https://www.theolympian.com/news/state/washington/article257755598.html">https://www.theolympian.com/news/state/washington/article257755598.html</a>
Health care workforce	HB 1868/ SB 5751	Labor-led effort to enhance safety standards at hospitals	<a href="http://www.wasafeandhealthy.com">www.wasafeandhealthy.com</a>
Behavioral health	Various	Efforts to refine last year's investments in behavioral health infrastructure	<a href="http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/mental-health/four-ways-lawmakers-want-to-improve-washingtons-mental-health-system/">www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/mental-health/four-ways-lawmakers-want-to-improve-washingtons-mental-health-system/</a>
Disability equity	Various	Effort to build change and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities	<a href="http://www.ddc.wa.gov/northstar-project/northstar">www.ddc.wa.gov/northstar-project/northstar</a>

# Key Resources

**Learn more about legislative proposals with these resources:**

- Sign up for NoHLA updates: [www.nohla.org](http://www.nohla.org)
- Look up a bill by number or topic: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/>
- How to participate in the legislative process:  
<https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Participating.aspx>
- Governor Inslee's proposed 2022 supplemental budget:  
<https://ofm.wa.gov/budget/state-budgets/gov-inslees-proposed-2022-supplemental-budgets>