

WSSA Advocacy Update 03/1/2020

Week 8 of the Washington State legislative session is upon us and the legislating continues. WSSA has been active on the ground in Olympia. There was [record turnout for WSMA's Legislative Summit on February 25](#) with the number of anesthesiologists reaching the double digits. Updates on legislative action and regulations is below.

Despite WSSA's continued opposition, **SB 6492** passed. This increases the state business and occupation tax, but now exempts businesses with under \$1 million in gross annual revenue from the tax increase protecting some small physician practices. Businesses with \$1 million or more in revenue will now pay 1.75% rather than 1.8%.

Advocacy against **HB 1630** kept it from being brought to the House floor for a vote. This bill would have granted naturopaths prescriptive authority for Schedules III-V drugs without detailing specific education and training requirements, increase the office-based procedures that may be performed by naturopaths, and allow them to sign and attest to any form that a physician may sign, including forms such as death certificates and disability determinations. Defeating this bill was one of our priorities in 2020 and we are happy to say it is dead for now.

The Washington Medical Commission and the Washington State Board of Osteopathic Medicine & Surgery have adopted amendments to their **opioid prescribing rules** to comply with **SB 5380**. New requirements include patient notification of the risks of prescription opioids, including the risk of dependence and overdose, pain management alternatives, and notification to the patient they have the right to refuse an opioid prescription for any reason. Completion of these requirements must be documented in the patient record. For a complete checklist of the pain management rule requirements, check the WSMA's website for a checklist. Send questions to policy@wsma.org.

There is ongoing work on legislation affecting prior authorization, international medical graduates, and substance use disorder treatment.

There are vacancies on the Washington State Board of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery and state Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee. The Department of Health is accepting applications through April 30 to fill one professional osteopathic physician member vacancy on the Washington State Board of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery. If you have questions about serving on the board, please send an email to osteopathic@doh.wa.gov.

The [ASA Legislative Conference is May 10-13](#) and there will again be a contingent from WSSA. It would be great to have more anesthesiologists join us. Please sign up at the link above or send a message to the office email below for more information and to see how you can participate.

There continues to be a lot of action in Olympia and DC. We will keep you updated on the legislation and rule-making. Please share your thoughts on this legislation with us at office@WA-anesthesiology.org or on our Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram feeds.