NCCA Lobbyist Report
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The 2019 legislative long session has been very different than recent sessions., in part, because the legislative Republicans no longer have a supermajority in both chambers (which would allow them to makes laws at will even over the objections of the Governor by overriding any veto).  Republicans held a supermajority in both the House and the Senate from 2011 until 2018, when Democrats broke the stronghold in the general elections. During these legislative sessions bills moved quickly according to the wishes of the leadership.

Now that Republicans just hold a simple majority things have been different. And very slow.  With less ability for the majority to have firm control of the session there are fewer bills moving, fewer committee hearings, fewer voting sessions, but a longer legislative session as leadership looks for opportunities to accomplish its agenda.

The Governor has been very engaged with his veto, and thus far the legislature has not overridden one of his vetoes session. The goal of the majority would be to override the veto of the state budget, and so far the votes are not there.

As we write this update, there is no new state budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year and the state is continuing spending levels from last fiscal year.  The legislature is now putting together a series of “mini budgets” in hopes the Governor will approved some or all of these less controversial bills with shared priorities.

There have been two items of particular interest to chiropractors:

1.     The State Health Plan released its plan reimbursement rates, slashing the rate for chiropractic care. DeVivo & Sams was able to speak directly to the State Treasurer and the Director of the State Health Plan, and upon their further review they increased the reimbursement rate in line with other health professionals.

2.     The issue of PT spinal manipulation was dealt with, finally, clearing the way for PTs and Chiropractors to band together to offer potential alternatives to prescribing opioids for back pain. The law change included an important provision that PTs shall not practice chiropractic.

The legislative session is expected to drag on until the Governor and legislators are able to put a budget in place.