



### [NAHU Happy Hour Podcast](#)

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## Join us for Capitol Conference!

### **The Power Equation: Engage, Educate and Empower Advocating for Employers and Consumers.**

NAHU's advocacy efforts in DC are priceless, but for \$199 you can attend the 2021 virtual Capitol Conference. February 22-24, 2021.

Attendance at this year's Capitol Conference is more important than ever and your participation will benefit your profession for years to come.

Monday starts the conference off with the General Session and the Regional Meetings.

Tuesday and Wednesday's General Sessions have members of Congress and the Administration as well as nationally recognized thought leaders as speakers. The afternoons are for virtual meetings with

Congressional Representatives.

The Conference will conclude Wednesday afternoon with the NAHU Power Hour; an opportunity to network with all your fellow attendees.

Click [HERE](#) to check out the agenda and registration information!

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## Time to Register for the State Symposium!

The 2021 Spring Symposium offers you two half-days of industry specific knowledge, legal updates, innovations and trends that impact your business. This two-day conference brings leaders in the health insurance industry together with 100+ health insurance

agents—designed to arm you with the latest new and useful strategies you can apply to your business today.

Click [HERE](#) to check out the agenda and registration information!





Amanda Riley

Membership Retention

*"She believed that she could, so she did."*

RS Grey

## This month's WAHU Board Member

Amanda is the Area VP of the Western Sales Team for Health Equity, living in Seattle, WA.

She has a passion for healthcare and finance, which gives her a perfect opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of Americans.

Helping others be the very best version of themselves and strengthening her own abilities keeps her motivated. This also drives her to ensure that every partner, broker, client and member receives the remarkable service Health Equity offers and will exhaust every possible resource to make sure they deliver.

When not at work, she enjoys hiking, riding her Peloton, lifting, cooking and eating amazing food, hanging out with her three daughters and husband as well as traveling to places she has never been.

## Legislative Update

### Senate Committee to Consider Bill to Fund "Foundational Public Health"—Health Insurers and TPA's Targeted with New Assessments

SB 5419 would impose new assessments on health insurers, Medicaid managed care organizations, and third party administrators that provide services to self-insured employers and Taft-Hartley labor trusts.

The proposal would impose assessments that would add \$3.25 per member per month in new costs on the health plans. The bill's assessments are estimated to generate over \$200 million next year, and over \$340 million in the following two years.

Public health advocates, some labor groups, and some managed Medicaid organizations have expressed support. Interestingly, other labor groups are expected to strongly oppose the measure.

A counterpart bill in the House—HB 1201—has also

been introduced and referred to the House Finance Committee.

### Senate Committee Considers Controversial "Any Willing Pharmacy Measure" and Bill on Mail Order Drugs"

Senator Patty Kuderer (D, 48<sup>th</sup> Legislative District) has introduced SB 5075, which would require pharmacy networks to permit entry for any retail pharmacy that requests to be added to the network. She has also introduced SB 5076—a measure that would require all health plan contracts with PBM's to provide that an enrollee cannot be provided prescription drugs from a non-resident pharmacy without affirmative authorization from a covered enrollee prior to filling any prescription.

AHIP together with the Washington Association of Health Care Plans and the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association testified in opposition to the

measures, expressing concern that SB 5075 interferes with managed care strategies that are intended to facilitate both care management and cost management priorities. Concerns were also raised that the bill would drive costs higher and force networks to accept pharmacies into their networks that may not adhere to network standards, or needs.

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Mel Sorensen, WAHU Lobbyist

## President's Corner

Vaccination centers are rolling out all around the country. I'm cautiously hopeful that anyone who wants a vaccine will be able to have it by the Summer.

Part of my hope is selfish in that I would really like to take my cruise to Hawaii in July. I'm crossing my fingers that we have progressed to a point in this pandemic that it is safe to travel again.

I would also love to see it safe for schools to reopen next Fall and for kids (and teachers, and parents) be

able to get back to some sort of normal existence.

Of course, right now we are struggling with vaccine and PPE supply and every day seems to have a new (and worse) variant of COVID-19 showing up.

This is definitely not the time to relax, but to keep up our safety precautions: Wearing our masks (double masks, even) washing hands, and keeping social distancing in mind as we go about our lives as best we can.

So my plan is to be even more careful and maybe look into shopping for our groceries online. My almost-80-year-old folks are getting their first vaccine dose this week, so I'm looking forward to the time we can hang out again.

The days are getting longer, and better times are ahead!



Mary Pierce, President

## Legislative Update, continued

### **Senate Committee Considers Controversial Bill on Prescription Drug Price Increases**

Senator Karen Keiser (D, 31<sup>st</sup> District) introduced SB 5020 that would require the Health Care Authority to impose a financial penalty on a drug manufacturer related to revenue generated from a price increase on a prescription drug that is not supported by clinical evidence. The bill would prohibit a drug manufacturer from withdrawing a drug from the market to avoid paying the penalty.

The Washington Association of Health Care Plans testified in general support of the bill, noting the increasing cost of prescription drugs as a part of every premium dollar. AWHP also noted that the revenue generated from the penalties imposed under the bill could be directed to the support of foundational public health.

Representatives from PhRMA and the biotech industry testified in opposition

to the measure, arguing that the penalties imposed under the bill amount to price fixing.

### **Insurance Producers Testify in Opposition to New Capital Gains Tax Proposal**

At a hearing before the Senate Ways and Means Committee on Thursday, January 14, insurance producers joined a long list of business stakeholders to testify in opposition to SB 5096—a measure that has been introduced by Senator June Robinson (D, 38th Legislative District), the Vice Chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The bill was introduced at the request of Governor Jay Inslee, and represents a central portion of his tax proposals for 2021.

The bill would enact a new 9% capital gains tax in Washington.

Business groups, including insurance producers, testified in opposition to the measure, arguing that investments that they have made in their businesses represents the value that they plan to use for their retirements, and they shouldn't lose 9% of it to a new capital gains tax.

They also noted that that the only states with capital gains taxes also have state income taxes, and that Washington voters and the courts have turned down income tax proposals multiple times.

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## Welcome New Members

Kathy Colgrove, Kaiser Permanente NW, Portland OR – sponsor: Harilyn Dumancas

Carmen Cooper, Kirkland, WA

Hope Coulter, Biggs Insurance, Vancouver WA – sponsor: Tyson Fuehrer

Alex Johnson, Cascade Valley Insurance, Gig Harbor, WA – sponsor Patty Rice

Jon Montgomery, Cascade Valley Insurance, Gig Harbor, WA – sponsor, Patty Rice

Felipe Sarquilla Jr, Felsar & Associates, Spokane, WA

## Our Mission

The Washington Association of Health Underwriters promotes the highest level of professional and ethical conduct amongst its membership. We deliver education, public policy information and policy recommendations to our members. In addition, we advocate consumer choice, accessible and affordable quality health care for our communities.

## Local Association Chapter Presidents

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**EWAHU** – Spokane – Julie Shepard-Hall, [integrityins@msn.com](mailto:integrityins@msn.com)

**NWAHU** – Seattle – Keith Wallace, [keith@riceinsurance.com](mailto:keith@riceinsurance.com)

**SSAHU** – South Sound – Laci Moyer, [lmoyer@pheinsurance.com](mailto:lmoyer@pheinsurance.com)

**TCAHU** – Tri-County – Harilyn Dumancas, [harilyn.t.dumancas@kp.org](mailto:harilyn.t.dumancas@kp.org)

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**We're on the Web!**

*See us at:*

[www.wahealthunderwriters.org](http://www.wahealthunderwriters.org)

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