

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - APRIL 26, 2024

HOUSE GOP LEADERS PRESENT BUDGET ADJUSTMENT PROPOSAL: On Thursday, Republican House Minority Leader Vincent Candelora, Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Tammy Nuccio and Finance Committee Ranking Member Holly Cheeseman held a press conference presenting their caucus' budget adjustment proposal which "keeps intact the spirit of the biennium budget that many supported, preserves many of the Governor's plans and adheres to previous commitments made" said Representative Candelora. The budget increases education spending by nearly \$300M across the board to include funding the \$75M shortage to special education from last year, maintaining the education cost share grant, investing in charter schools in Danbury and Middletown, increasing Birth to Three Medicaid rates, aiding nonprofits, and providing \$43M in funding to the teachers' retirement system. The proposal removes the highway use tax, utilizes \$80M from the state staffing plan (due to open positions), and makes policy changes to remove healthcare coverage for undocumented immigrants at an estimated additional savings of \$50M. The GOP proposal does not utilize ARPA funds.

SENATE PASSES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BILL: In a party line vote of 24-12, the Senate passed SB 2 - An Act Concerning Artificial Intelligence as previously amended by Senate Amendment Schedule A and finally through a "strike all" [Senate Amendment "B" - LCO 4463](#). The legislation establishes a new regulatory paradigm for Artificial Intelligence systems in Connecticut. The bill focuses primarily on preventing algorithmic discrimination in systems around: (A) any criminal case assessment, any sentencing or plea agreement analysis or any pardon, parole, probation or release decision; (B) any education enrollment or opportunity; (C) any employment or employment opportunity; (D) any financial or lending service; (E) any essential government service; (F) any health care service; or (G) any housing, insurance or legal services.

Connecticut is among the first states in the nation to consider AI legislation. The bill, which pertains to deployers of systems with 50 or more employees, includes testing, transparency, and disclosure around AI. The bill faces an uncertain future as the Governor has expressed concern over the measure.

The bill now heads to the House for its consideration.

PAID SICK TIME LEGISLATION PASSES THE HOUSE: After a lengthy 7 hour debate, the House on Wednesday passed HB 5005 - An Act Expanding Paid Sick Days in the State as amended by [House Amendment "A" - LCO 4386](#). The strike all amendment, which becomes the bill, requires paid time off be provided by all Connecticut employers - to be phased in over a three-year period starting Jan. 1, 2025, for employers with 25 or more employees; Jan. 1, 2026, for employers with 11 or more employees; and January 1, 2027, with employers employing 1 or more employees. Employees would accrue paid time off at a rate of one hour per thirty hours worked and would be eligible to use said time after 120 days of employment. The bill also removes the requirement of providing a doctor's note when taking sick time off. Employers currently offering 40 hours/5 days of paid time off are exempt under the legislation as are employees covered under certain union contracts. The bill passed the House with a vote of 88-61. In a press release found [here](#), Governor Lamont supported the House vote saying "The

legislation approved by the House today strikes an appropriate balance between protecting our workforce while also enacting safeguards for small businesses to ensure that this right is not being misused." The bill was transmitted to the Senate where it awaits further action.

LEGISLATURE APPROVES STATE OF CONNECTICUT/SEBAC WAGE

AGREEMENT: Both chambers met on Tuesday passing their respective House and Senate Resolutions Proposing Approval of an Agreement Between the State of Connecticut and the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition ("SEBAC"). The agreement, which provides for a 2.5% general wage increase and 2% step increase, impacts approximately 46,000 state employees. The contract cost is estimated at \$154 million which includes \$32.7 million for an increase of 4.5% toward the University of Connecticut block grant. After considerable discussion, the Senate approved the Resolution with a 24-12 vote. The House also approved the Resolution with a vote of 106-44. Governor Lamont applauded the legislature on its approval of the agreement in a press release found [here](#).

SESSION: The state House of Representatives and state Senate convened on both Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.

On Tuesday the House passed HB 5149 - An Act Concerning Cafe and Package Store Permittees; HB 5288 - An Act Aligning State Law with Federal Law Concerning Service Animals; HB 5317 - An Act Requiring a Study Concerning the Funding for and Effectiveness of the Community Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention Program; and HB 5257 - An Act Concerning Liability for Damage to Person or Property Caused by a Dog.

The Senate passed SB 133 - An Act Concerning Regulation of Prescription Drugs and Related Professions on Tuesday as well as numerous executive nominations on Wednesday.

The House also met on Thursday passing HB 5261 - An Act Prohibiting the Sale of Energy Drink to Individuals Under Sixteen Years of Age; HB 5232 - An Act Concerning Solar Projects Throughout the State; and HB 5318 - An Act Requiring the Licensure of Lactation Consultants.

NEXT WEEK: The House of Representatives plans to meet Monday through Friday next week and the Senate plans to meet Tuesday through Friday. Both chambers will likely convene on Saturday next weekend as well.