

November 17, 2010



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (96-66)

HOUSE, SENATE RETURN FOR VETO SESSION

The Illinois General Assembly returned to the Capitol Tuesday to begin the fall Veto Session. The session is scheduled for Tuesday-Thursday this week and three days from November 29 to December 1. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate have also scheduled session days in January right after the first of the year in case extra days are needed to move some controversial items while the “lame ducks” are still voting members of the legislature. Those legislative members that lost their election on November 3 (or who chose not to run for re-election) are still seated members until the second Wednesday of January when the newly elected members are sworn in.

Below are some of the issues being debated in the Capitol this Veto Session.

PENSION BORROWING

The House passed a bill in the spring (SB 3514) intended to allow the State to issue bonds in order to create a revenue stream to make the 2011 pension payments. The bill was approved by the House in May, but the Senate never voted on it. There is no money in the Fiscal Year 2011 budget to make the pension payments without either passing such a bill; or approving legislation that allows the State to skip the 2011 payment; or approve some other revenue source that would cover the cost of the payment. The Senate is trying to find the requisite number of votes to pass the bill and send it to the Governor so the pension payments can be made on time.

Most observers believe that the worse thing that could happen would be to simply avoid making the pension payment next year. It is estimated that for every dollar that is not paid next year, it will take \$37 to make-up that payment over the pension payment schedule. Multiply this by the billions owed and it is a staggering amount.

No Senate action has yet taken place on this legislation.

INCOME TAX INCREASE

Governor Pat Quinn continues to push his proposal to increase the State individual income tax rate from 3% to 4%. The proposal still is lacking the necessary votes for approval in the House of Representatives – and there is still no such bill drafted or introduced. The Senate approved a tax increase bill in the spring last year (HB 174 in 2009) that was never taken up for a vote in the House. **Senate President John Cullerton** has stated that any new income tax increase legislation will have to start in the House this time.

House Speaker Michael Madigan is reportedly open to the idea of some type of tax increase, but has stated that this must be a bipartisan effort and that Republican votes must be on any such roll call vote. Thus far, the House Republican Caucus has been steadfast in its opposition to an income

tax rate increase. However, given the number of “lame ducks”, anything could happen between now and January 12.

GAMING EXPANSION

Once again, there is another proposal to expand gaming in Illinois in an effort to find new State revenues without increasing taxes. The current proposal (SB 3970) would establish land-based casinos in Chicago, add several more riverboat casinos, allow slot machines at horse race tracks, and expand the number of gaming positions on current riverboat casinos. As always, there is much controversy surrounding the proposal. Many groups and organizations oppose any expansion of gaming in the State while current gaming interests are arguing amongst themselves over the proposal (current riverboat owners vs. future riverboat owners, horse race organizations vs. riverboat interests, Chicago power brokers vs. other Chicago power brokers looking for a piece of the Chicago casino action, just to name a few).

FOIA EXEMPTIONS

HB 5154 (Chapa La Via, D-Aurora) amends the Personnel Record Review Act to provide that disclosure of performance evaluations of all public employees (including school districts) under the Freedom of Information Act shall be prohibited. Governor Quinn executed an amendatory veto so that only the evaluations of police officers would be exempt from FOIA requests, and that all other public employees – including school district employees (other than superintendents, principals, and teachers) – could have their performance evaluations disclosed.

The House Tuesday voted to override the Governor’s veto. If the Senate also votes to override the veto, the legislation will become law protecting all school personnel performance evaluations. The performance evaluations for superintendents, principals, and teachers were exempted from FOIA requests in legislation approved in January (SB 315).

DIABETES POLICIES

HB 6065 (Cross, R-Oswego) requires school districts to have a diabetes care plan for students and requires delegated care aides to perform the duties necessary to assist a student with diabetes in accordance with his or her diabetes care plan. The bill originally had an immediate effective date, but the Governor’s amendatory veto moved that effective date back to June 1, 2011. The House Tuesday voted to override the Governor’s veto. If the Senate also votes to override the veto, the effective date of the bill will be immediate.

GET UPDATED ON LEGISLATION AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Alliance lobbyists have several panels scheduled at the annual conference this weekend wherein legislators will be updating Alliance members on the latest from the Capitol.

Friday at 1:30

State Policy Makers: What’s Next?
Regency Ballroom A
West Tower of the Hyatt Regency

Representative Roger Eddy (R-Hutsonville)
Representative Frank Mautino (D-Spring Valley)
Representative Linda Chapa La Via (D-Aurora)

**Please note that a published panel titled "2010 Legislative Session Review", originally set for the Superior Room A/B in the Sheraton Hotel has been merged with the above panel.*

Saturday at 10:30

Legislative Issues Impacting Schools
Regency Ballroom C
West Tower of the Hyatt Regency

Representative Barbara Flynn Currie (D-Chicago)
Representative Roger Eddy (R-Hutsonville)

Federal Relations Network
AC/Hong Kong Ballroom
West Tower of the Hyatt Regency

How to become involved in federal legislative issues.

Saturday at 1:30

EFAB Update
Grand Ballroom E
East Tower of the Hyatt Regency

Members of the Education Funding Advisory Board

Economic Development and Schools
Regency Ballroom B
West Tower of the Hyatt Regency

Representative John Bradley (D-Marion)

The legislative report is written and edited by the lobbyists of the Illinois Association of School Boards to provide information to the members of the organizations that comprise the Statewide School Management Alliance.

Alliance Legislative Reports:
Bill Text/Status: Illinois General Assembly

www.iasb.com
www.ilga.gov