

The

SMITH HILL REPORT



PUBLISHED BY THE RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS/AFT, AFL-CIO

Overwhelming Support for Teachers

On a 69-3 vote ([click to view vote](#)), the House of Representatives overwhelmingly supported teachers by approving Rep. William O'Brien's bill ([H7096Aaa](#)) to implement a cyclical evaluation process for effective and highly effective teachers. The bill would alleviate annual requirements to do Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and other aspects of the current evaluation process mandated by RIDE. Only three Representatives voted against the bill; Antonio Giarusso, Patricia Morgan and Joy Hearn.

The bill now moves to the Senate Education Committee, which has already had a hearing on a companion bill, [S2738](#) introduced by Senator Maryellen Goodwin. Thousands of notecards signed by RIFTHP members have already been delivered to Senators and Representatives in support of the bills.

RIFTHP lobbyist James Parisi and Tim Duffy, Executive Director of the RI Association of School Committees appeared on Newsmakers this past weekend discussion the legislation. If you did not see the show on Sunday, you can view it by [clicking here](#).

Charter School Construction Aid

The RIFTHP joined the Association of School Committees raising objection to legislation that would award increased state school construction money for charter schools. [S2208](#) (Doyle) would change the state reimbursement from 30% of cost to the reimbursement in the community in which the school is located. The bill was heard in the Senate Finance

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Committee on May 22, 2014. An amended version of the bill was presented to the committee that would exclude mayoral charter schools from the higher reimbursement rate and would make the increase based on the average school construction reimbursement for all sending school districts.



RIFTHP lobbyist James Parisi and School Committees Association Executive Director Tim Duffy both opposed the bill. Parisi cited the recent three year moratorium on state reimbursement for school construction and renovation, cited hundreds of millions of dollars in needs in our existing public school districts that ought to be met before money is diverted to non-profit charters and mayoral charters. Steve Nardelli, a representative of the Association of Charter Schools, testified in support of the bill.

LaborVision is seen on Cox
Ch. 14 and FioS Ch. 33

Tuesdays @ 7PM

Thursday @ 8PM

Saturday @ 5PM

Pension Revocation

Pension legislation supported by Providence Mayor Angel Taveras was heard in the Senate Finance Committee on Thursday, May 29. The Providence Mayor testified in support of the bill, [S2773](#) (Goodwin), that would prevent a municipal worker, or their spouse and dependents, from receiving a pension while incarcerated under a life sentence. The bill was introduced in response to the murder conviction of a retired Providence police officer.

RIFTHP lobbyist James Parisi objected to the bill, citing similar arguments put forth to the House Judiciary Committee several weeks earlier. He noted that we view pensions as deferred compensation, not a gratuity that can be taken away by a municipality. Joining Parisi in opposition to the bill was Ralph Ezovski of the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, Paul Valletta of the RI State Association of Firefighters, and Jim Cenerini of Council 94.

A second bill, [S2982](#), would permit the state Superior Court to adjudicate pension revocations made pursuant to municipal ordinances. Both bills were held for further study.

On the Move

The following bills have passed one chamber and have been sent to the other chamber for consideration:

[H7067A](#) School Construction – Former Mining Sites, McLoughlin

[H7124A](#) Student and Employee Social Media Privacy, Kennedy

[H7219A](#) School Contract Employee Background Check, Giarrusso

[S2281](#) Joint Committee of the Repealer, Lynch

[S2351Aaa](#) Student Assistance Program Funding, Miller

[S2432aa](#) Joint Study Commission – Education Aid – Income Tax Revenue, Satchell

[S2537](#) Constitutional Convention Preparatory Commission, Fogarty

[S2538](#) Constitutional Convention Ballot Question, Fogarty

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