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# SMITH HILL REPORT



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April 24, 2017

## Spring Break

The General Assembly was in recess for school vacation week and will reconvene on Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. There were no committee hearings during the break.

## Bill Introductions

### **Public Employee Required TDI Participation**

[\(5894\)](#) *Maldonado, House Finance*

The RIFTHP opposes this bill because it imposes a requirement that public employees participate in TDI. It would expand temporary disability insurance benefits to state and municipal employees, increase TDI benefits, change the calculation of the taxable wage base, modify the contribution formula and increase the maximum amount of benefit weeks from thirty (30) to thirty-two (32). It also would increase from four (4) to six (6) weeks the length of time employees can receive temporary caregiver insurance (TCI) benefits and would make employees who care for their siblings or grandchildren eligible for benefits.

### **Board of Education Qualifications**

[\(H5906\)](#) *Messier, House Health Education and Welfare*

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would provide that the Chair of the Council for Postsecondary Education and the Chair of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education be elected by the council members. In addition, each member of the Board of Education would be required to have prior experience in the field of education.

### **Financial Transaction Transparency**

[\(H5923\)](#) *Carson, House Finance*

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would require the General Treasurer to maintain its transparent treasury initiative to assist the public in accessing information regarding how state pension investments are managed and performing.

### **State Payment of Charter Tuitions over 5% District Enrollment**

([H5980](#) Marszalkowski, House Finance)

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would provide that beginning in FY 2018, the state would pay the local share or contribution of charter public school tuition for the number of students attending the charter public schools in excess of five percent (5%) of the average daily membership of all pupils attending public schools within those school districts.

### **Retirement Income Tax Exemption Increase - \$15,000 to \$25,000**

([H5981](#) Marszalkowski, House Finance)

The RIFTHP supports this bill would increase the exemptions for taxable retirement income to twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000). This increased exemption would apply to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2018.

### **Pension COLA – Investment Performance**

([H5992](#) O'Brien, House Finance)

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would award all members of the pension system a three percent (3%) annual benefit adjustment (COLA) applied to the first fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) of a member's retirement allowance on and after January 1, 2018, provided the prior year investment return yields a gain of ten percent (10%) or more until the pension system funding ratio exceeds eighty percent (80%).

### **Tax Credit Vouchers – Private and Religious Schools**

([H6031](#) Lancia, House Finance)

The RIFTHP opposes this bill which would increase the total aggregate amount of tax credits approved for a business entity meeting the requisite criteria to an aggregate amount of all tax credits not exceeding five million dollars (\$5,000,000) in fiscal year 2018. This act would also include a new definition for an "eligible business entity".

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