

Subject: Monday Morning Group Minutes 1.24.11
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CBIA Monday Morning Group

January 24, 2011

Next meeting – Monday, January 31

Commerce (Louis Bach)– The Commerce Committee met last Thursday to raise concepts. As the session progresses, bills relating to job impact statements, a possible film and digital media tax credit, and a manufacturers' reinvestment fund all warrant attention. Following presentations by CCAT and the CT Technology Council, one of the committee members felt compelled during Q & A to refer, on three separate occasions, to the "myth" that high taxes and high energy costs preclude business growth in the state. Unfortunately, high taxes and high energy costs play a large and very real role in driving business away from Connecticut.

Please contact Louis Bach at Louis.Bach@cbia.com for information regarding Commerce.

Education (Louis Bach) – The Education Committee is meeting this afternoon and there are a few concepts on the agenda that are worth watching. Should AAC the Establishment of a Coordinated Early Childhood Education System come to include language relating to efficiency and effectiveness we would be very interested in the bill.

Also on the Education agenda is AAC Donations of Equipment to the Regional Vocational-Technical School System, presumably aimed at eliminating disincentives for donations and following on the heels of a similar concept raised last week in the Higher Education Committee.

Higher Ed has also raised a concept entitled AAC Connecticut's Manufacturing and Technology Workforce. Legislators on that committee acknowledged that there are manufacturing and technology jobs going unfilled even in this tough economy because Connecticut schools aren't producing graduates capable of filling those positions. Legislation that effectively addresses this disparity would certainly be a step in the right direction.

Please contact Louis Bach at Louis.Bach@cbia.com for information regarding Education.

Energy (Kevin Hennessy)– The Energy & Technology committee voted to draft proposed SB-1 last week. The co-chairs indicated that the bill will be a reintroduction of last year's emergency-certified SB-493 even though Governor Malloy indicated that he would prefer to see more bills focusing on specific energy issues rather than one large bill. Once the bill is drafted, the committee plans to have a public hearing on it. Nothing is scheduled yet.

Please contact Kevin Hennessy at Kevin.Hennessy@cbia.com for information regarding Energy.

Environment (Eric Brown) - A slew of bills have been introduced to continue last year's focus on regulatory reform for the DEP and other regulatory agencies. Bills on permitting, creation of a business regulatory commission, beefed up fiscal notes for proposed regulations, critiques on federal consistency and having a review of all state regulations are among the bills focused on Connecticut's regulatory climate.

Brownfields already has a placeholder bill, SB-253. We are working with a variety of people to push aggressive Brownfields reform this year.

Please contact Eric Brown at Eric.Brown@cbia.com for information regarding Environment.

Executive & Legislative Appointments (Bonnie Stewart) - Continuing on the appointment front, the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee will meet twice this week. On Tuesday, January 25, they'll hold a hearing and then meet on the following appointments:

- Melody Currey to be the commissioner of Department of Motor Vehicles
- Steven Revczky to be the commissioner of Department of Agriculture
- Anthony J. Castagno to be a member of the State Elections Enforcement Commission

- Nicholas H. Mullane, II, to be a member of the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority Board

On Thursday, January 27, the Committee will hold a hearing and then meet on the following appointments:

- Dr. Jewel Mullen to be the commissioner of the Department of Public Health
- Jeffrey Parker to be the commissioner of the Department of Transportation
- Kevin B. Sullivan to be the commissioner of the Department of Revenue Services

Please contact Bonnie Stewart at Bonnie.Stewart@cbia.com for information regarding Executive & Legislative Appointments.

GAE (Kevin Hennessy)– The GAE committee is meeting Monday (1/24) at 11:00 am to raise concepts and reserve subject matter public hearings.

Please contact Kevin Hennessy a Kevin.Hennessy@cbia.com for information regarding GAE.

Healthcare (Eric George) – The Insurance Committee will be holding a public hearing Tuesday during which it will be considering a few bills that will raise health care costs.

SB-13 prohibits insurance carriers from having participants pay any copayments for certain prescriptions. This prohibition acts as a cost-shift onto all other health care consumers.

SB-16 is the vehicle for the perennial standards-in-contracts debate that requires (and prohibits) various provisions in insurance carrier/doctor contracts.

Finally, SB-20 expands the existing hearing aid mandate, which increases health care costs for small employers.

On Thursday, the Insurance Committee will be considering more health care cost drivers.

SB-10, SB-12, SB-17 and SB-21 all increase health care costs by either creating a new (or expanding and existing) health care mandate, or shift health care costs by prohibiting copayments for preventive care services. Finally, SB-32 and SB-34 prohibit certain offsets in disability policies, increasing the cost of these policies and influencing employers not to offer them as benefits to their employees.

Please contact Eric George at Eric.George@cbia.com for information regarding Healthcare.

Judiciary (Kevin Hennessy) – The Judiciary committee has a public hearing and committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday (1/26). They will be hearing and voting on judicial nominations.

Please contact Kevin Hennessy a Kevin.Hennessy@cbia.com for information regarding Judiciary.

Labor (Kia Murrell)– There was a flurry of activity on labor and employment bills last week. Among the most notable proposals were:

SB-129 and HB-5460 AAC Captive Audience Meetings. These bills appear to be the same concept as was considered in 2009, but more complete legislative language is needed to be sure.

HB-5466 AAC Mandating Employers to Provide Paid Sick Leave. A perennial proposal that has been introduced in each of the last 4 sessions. It should be noted that Senator Tony Guglielmo (R-Windsor) was the lone Republican to vote for raising the concept in the Labor Committee.

HB-5284, SB-360 & SB-361 AAC The Use of Credit Reports/Scores in Employment Decisions. Although CBIA has opposed this measure in the past, its unclear how many employers in the state would be affected by a prohibition on using credit reports in hiring decisions. Please contact Kia Murrell if your company needs further info on this proposal.

A variety of proposals relating to unemployment compensation; jobs impact statements and prevailing wage standards were also introduced.

On Thursday at 2 p.m. the Labor Committee will hold an informational forum on the state of the Unemployment Trust Fund. This forum is an important step towards educating legislators about impending unemployment tax increases on employers.

Please contact Kia Murrell at Kia.Murrell@cbia.com for information regarding Labor.

Planning & Development (Bonnie Stewart) - The Planning and Development Committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday. They haven't published an agenda yet so we'll have to

update you next week on the matters before the Committee and the actions, if any, they took.

Please contact Bonnie Stewart at Bonnie.Stewart@cbia.com for information regarding Planning & Development.

Spending & Taxes (Bonnie Stewart) – Neither the Appropriations nor the Finance Committee have yet scheduled meetings to raise bills. With both committees having a Committee Bill deadline of February 16, and a Raised Bill deadline of February 25, we expect both committees to meet and raise concepts prior to the Governor's budget address on February 16.

The Appropriations Committee has scheduled a hearing for this Tuesday, January 25. At the hearing they plan to review 8 collective bargaining agreements. They include:

1. S.R. No. 8 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT AND CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (P-4 BARGAINING UNIT).
2. H.R. No. 9 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT AND CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (P-4 BARGAINING UNIT).
3. S.R. No. 9 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF THE STIPULATED AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES AND THE CONNECTICUT POLICE AND FIRE UNION, IUPA/IAFF, AFL-CIO (NP-5).
4. H.R. No. 11 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF THE STIPULATED AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES AND THE CONNECTICUT POLICE AND FIRE UNION, IUPA/IAFF, AFL-CIO (NP-5).
5. S.R. No. 10 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF THE STIPULATED AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES AND THE CONNECTICUT POLICE AND FIRE UNION, IUPA/IAFF, AFL-CIO (NP-5).
6. H.R. No. 12 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF THE STIPULATED AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES AND THE CONNECTICUT POLICE AND FIRE UNION, IUPA/IAFF, AFL-CIO (NP-5).
7. S.R. No. 11 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF THE STIPULATED AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES AND THE CONNECTICUT POLICE AND FIRE UNION, IUPA/IAFF, AFL-CIO (NP-5).
8. H.R. No. 10 RESOLUTION PROPOSING APPROVAL OF THE STIPULATED AGREEMENT AMONG THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE SERVICES AND THE CONNECTICUT POLICE AND FIRE UNION, IUPA/IAFF, AFL-CIO (NP-5).

Following the hearing, the Appropriations Committee plans to meet. The meeting could be to act on the collective bargaining resolutions, vote to draft Committee Bills, vote to raise bills or a combination of any of these actions. No agenda is available at present so we'll have to wait and see what they decide to do.

Moving to the administration, the resolution to appoint Ben Barnes as the Secretary of OPM was approved by the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee last Thursday, January 20. It now moves to the Senate for action.

This week, on Thursday, January 27, the resolution to appoint Kevin Sullivan the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue Services will be taken up by the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. We've also learned that Rich Nicholson will be retiring from the DRS at the end of the month. We look forward to working with Kevin, but will also miss Rich greatly.

Please contact Bonnie Stewart at Bonnie.Stewart@cbia.com for information regarding Spending & Taxes.

Transportation (Eric Brown) - There are a few bills and concepts that we will be following in transportation this session. The bills to create a Bradley Airport Authority, tolling in Connecticut and the State Transportation Fund just to name a few.

The Transportation Committee, the DMV and the DOT are holding oversight hearing on Wednesday at the LOB starting at 10 a.m.

Please contact Eric Brown at Eric.Brown@cbia.com for information regarding Transportation.

Connecticut Business Day is scheduled for Wednesday, March 9 – SAVE THE DATE! In addition to a keynote speaker, the morning will include four issue break-out sessions: Energy/Environment, Labor, Tax/Budget and Small Business. More details to follow.

For other information, check out "[Inside the Capitol](#)," CBIA's public policy blog.

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